

THE LIBRARIANS' ROUND TABLE

# INTERLIBRARY LOANS

JAMES A. McMILLEN

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THE LIBRARIANS' ROUND TABLE

## INTERLIBRARY LOANS

*The Librarians' Round Table*

School Library Experience. Martha Wilson.

Selective Cataloging. Henry B. Van Hoesen.

Interlibrary Loans. James E. McMillen.

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THE LIBRARIANS' ROUND TABLE

SELECTED ARTICLES ON  
INTERLIBRARY LOANS

Compiled by  
JAMES A. McMILLEN  
*Librarian, Louisiana State University*

NEW YORK  
THE H. W. WILSON COMPANY  
1928

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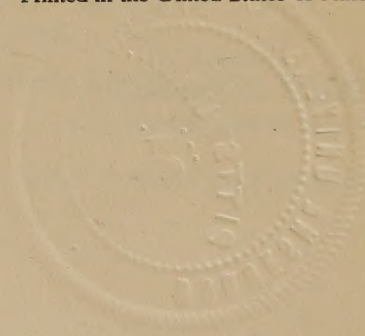
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Published May 1928

Printed in the United States of America





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## PREFACE

At the fiftieth anniversary conference of the American Library Association at Atlantic City in October, 1926 the two sessions of the College and Reference Section were devoted to a discussion of interlibrary loans. This subject was presented in all of its phases by speakers from abroad as well as from our own country and it was suggested by some that this material be printed and thus made available for all interested in this form of reference work. This volume is the result of that expressed interest and is intended to be little more than the proceedings of the meetings referred to above.

Some material has been added that well supplements the text, such as the pioneer article on the subject by S. S. Green, the A.L.A. code, and the statement prepared by J. I. Wyer for his forthcoming textbook on reference work which is being prepared under the auspices of the A.L.A. curriculum studies. With the further addition of the bibliography it is hoped that this small volume will serve as a manual.

The recent publication of the *Union List of Serials in the Libraries of the United States and Canada* puts at our disposal the greatest aid we have available for the location of files of journals and will serve to make the interlibrary loan a more important factor in study and research in this country. The appearance in 1927 of the second volume of the *World List of Scientific Periodicals* has created a similar tool for the location of sets of journals in British libraries. In Germany, likewise, we have similar compilations, both of which are publications of the Auskunftsbureau der Deutschen Bibliotheken.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gesamt-Zeitschriften-Verzeichnis* (1914) and *Gesamtverzeichnis der Ausländischen Zeitschriften* (GAZ). 1914-1924 (1927+).

The multiplication of books and periodicals has grown to such proportions that no library can hope to gather but a portion of the product of the press, the limitations of space and budgets being such as to make the selection of books a matter of increased importance in the conduct of every library. The development of the union catalog whereby the location of books can be determined is another bibliographic tool to be found in most of our larger libraries.

Specialization has been forced upon all institutions because competition among libraries has made it a financial impossibility for all learned libraries to procure sets of the rarer journals. Division of the field of knowledge in particular sections or localities has been found almost necessary if that region is to have at its disposal the research material which it needs. Probably the best example of this very necessary form of cooperation is presented by the libraries of Greater Chicago which has enabled the Newberry Library and the John Crerar Library to become notable in their respective fields while, at the same time, these two collections supplement those of the Chicago Public Library, the University of Chicago Library and the Library of Northwestern University in nearby Evanston.

Another development of the recent past is that of the photostat whereby reproductions of manuscripts and printed matter may be easily and inexpensively supplied by libraries to other libraries or individual scholars. In many cases a photograph of a document or a few pages from a printed book or newspaper can be furnished more cheaply than the book can be transported from one city to another. This method of interchange is often better for it does away with the possibility of loss of valuable volumes in transit and eliminates the factor of time in their use. The greater libraries have long been supplied with such equipment and others are adding the



photostat when their importance demands and their budget permits.

The interlibrary loan, the union catalog both in its book and card forms, and specialization in purchase are present day examples of library cooperation. Our library literature contains much material upon all phases of such cooperation but it has been thought better to limit the contents of this volume to material directly bearing upon interlibrary loans. This book is, therefore, to be considered an attempt to present the subject of interlibrary loans in all its present-day aspects.

JAMES A. McMILLEN, *Librarian*,  
Louisiana State University,  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

February 29, 1928.



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## INTERLIBRARY LOANS

### THEORY AND PRACTICE OF INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN AMERICAN LIBRARIES<sup>1</sup>

The professional forefather of interlibrary loans seems to have been Samuel S. Green, of Worcester, Massachusetts. In the very first number of the *Library Journal*, page 15, we find a letter from him, dated Worcester, September 4, 1876. So, way back at the beginning of things, we see the germ, transplanted, it is true, for he says, "I am informed that a plan of this kind is in operation in Europe and that in many places it is easy to get through the local library books belonging to libraries in distant countries." Then, "Perhaps the matter is worthy of the consideration of the Conference of Libraries in Philadelphia" (*Library Journal*. 1:15-16). The Conference met October 4, 1876. Mr. Green gave an address, but the nearest that the subject was approached was in a paper by Barnwell of Philadelphia on a universal catalog, speaking of the value of knowing where a book may be found (*Library Journal*. 1:54-8). But in 1891, in his presidential address, Mr. Green said: "When the first number of the *Library Journal* was about to be issued in 1876, the editor-in-chief wrote to me to ask if I did not have some contribution to make to it. I immediately sent a communication . . . on the lending of books to other libraries, in which I earnestly advocated the plan which had long been in practice in some of the libraries of Europe, of lending of books by one library to another for the use of students." Then

<sup>1</sup> By M. O. Young, reference librarian, Princeton University Library, Princeton, N.J.

Mr. Green goes on to name some of the libraries in this country which had been generous in their adoption of the idea (*Library Journal*. 16: Conf. No. 5-6). Two years later, Mr. Dewey in the *Library Journal* said: "The last few years hav witnest a great change in the rules of many of our best libraries. Interlibrary loans which wer a litl while ago almost unknown ar now of daily occurrence." He warns against abuse of the system by individuals, and mentions the disadvantages of extra trouble, exposure of the book to injury, and that a book borrowed is apt to be wanted at the lending library—none of which facts is of great weight, where the borrowing library is sure of the need of the request and where packing is careful. "As yet I have had to recall but one book needed locally while on loan and that was when I had yielded to an unreasonable request for a very recent periodical."

About the same time, appeared an inquiry in the *Library Journal* asking why libraries should not agree to furnish books on request of another library, and this was answered that Harvard and the Boston Athenaeum have often been drawn upon in that way. A second letter from Philadelphia, explains that they had looked toward a general union of the various libraries of the country, not necessarily in writing, but with a mutual understanding. In 1898, Mr. Samuel S. Green writes of his twenty years' experience at Worcester with interlibrary loans. He had lent and borrowed much and had never lost or injured a book. "I am decidedly of the opinion that the plan of inter-loaning has not yet been carried anywhere so far as to become a nuisance. If it should become so, it could probably be abated by enforcing rules dictated by common sense. I am of the opinion that the system should be more widely extended and that small libraries should lend to one another as well as the smaller borrowing from larger ones. The rules should be strictly



enforced. . . I favor the course of payment of costs by the library. . . But is not the plan of interlibrary loaning one-sided? Do not the large libraries do favors without return? But should not the smaller library try to make some return? They should be careful to see that the large libraries are fully supplied with such local literature as they desire and should be on the outlook for opportunities to help" (*Library Journal*. 23: 567-8).

In 1899, Dr. E. C. Richardson, speaking of the subject, mentions the unnecessary duplication of periodicals (a disappearing problem now). And he idealizes with a central national library at Washington, with branches in New Orleans, San Francisco, Chicago, and New York. "There are," he said, "various ways of practical cooperation but the foundation of all is cooperation in lending. With this principle well established, cooperation in specialization and cataloging will receive new impetus" (*Library Journal*. 24: Conf. No. 32-6). Dr. Richardson in his presidential address of 1905, again urged cooperation (*Library Journal*. 30: Conf. No. 6).

The vision of a sort of central storage plant, perhaps under the American Library Association, continued for a while—confused at times with the Library of Congress.—In 1908, Mr. Lane proposed a College Library Lending and Reference Bureau, in some library center, as Boston or Cambridge, this institution to collect catalog cards, catalogs, union lists, to produce union lists, to advise correspondents where books may be obtained (*Library Journal*. 33: 429-33, 506). But Mr. Bishop did not favor any such development, as the Library of Congress was already equipped. The American Library Association Committee on Co-ordination in 1910 discussed the central lending library idea, but the fact that the Library of Congress, Harvard and other libraries had been developing and extending privileges, made, apparently, new ideas fade (*American Library Association Bulletin*.

4:660-1). And in 1912, Mr. Putnam and Mr. Lane, seeing that their institutions seemed to be nominated to carry the chief burden of lending, stated their policies (*American Library Association Bulletin*. 6:97-9). So we may leave that situation as the sensible one, without creating a new institution or much machinery.

The growth of library methods has been different here than on the continent. The Bureau of Information in Berlin seems to be an efficient institution. Scandinavia, Italy, France have developed their systems, the best of all these being their liberality. . . This may be the place for a few suggestions as to the system as a whole. I believe we would do well to have Library of Congress cards made for all titles which we have located with difficulty. We should, as some one has suggested, be especially careful with libraries from which we borrow most, to supply them with such of our own publications and local material as is possible. In case any libraries feel that they are being imposed upon, that they are spending too great an amount for service to unrelated institutions, I suggest that the American Library Association be a clearing house, that such libraries send to headquarters statistics and that the borrowing libraries be accordingly levied. A small fee for each loan is another possible solution. Libraries much levied upon could, if limits are essential, limit the number loaned at one time to any library, or could limit the number to be loaned to any one library during one year. I do feel that the libraries doing much borrowing would prefer any reasonable system rather than to have the favors curtailed. Another idea which should work out is that of advertising for elusive items. I do not see why the *Publishers' Weekly* or the *Library Journal* couldn't have a space for such a purpose.

Now, something must be said about the mechanics

of the system. The purpose is to procure books as speedily as possible, to ensure good care, and a safe and prompt return. No matter how few books are borrowed or loaned, extra records should be kept; charging cards should not be kept in the regular charging file, alone. Some libraries keep their entire correspondence, even permanently, either in the regular file or, in one case, large scrap books. To me, this is wholly unnecessary, and merely takes time and space. It is as antiquated and without reason, other than precedent, as location of books by date of acquisition. Accuracy, yes, but not by wading through papers and cards of all shapes and sizes.

One is asked to borrow a book. All possible information is obtained, perhaps by force, from the person. It is made sure that the request is necessary, the work justifying it and no substitute being possible, then it is made sure that there is not a copy in the library. The blank or letter is sent. To whom? The *Union List of Serials* is becoming the greatest single piece of library machinery yet started. A union catalog, catalog and bulletins and lists of individual libraries, subject bibliographies, the Johnston and Mudge list (*U.S. Bureau of Education Bulletin*. 1912:23), these may be of use. Mr. Lane in one of his papers spoke of the collection at Harvard of this very sort of thing. One minor clue in the case of American writers, is to ascertain their alma mater. Most colleges attempt to collect the works of their alumni and should be free in lending them.

If the title is definitely located, all may be well. If located in more than one, usually the nearest is the logical place. If not located, past experience, likelihood and other indefinite factors determine the choice. You can, of course, ask one of the possible institutions, or you can send another form to several possibilities inquiring as to ownership. Complications rise between these forms

unless the statement is specific in the latter case that the book need not be sent until requested. Now—the requests are off—there must be a record at home. A carbon of the letters is waste. A card record is the only safe and sane method. At the head, author and title, below as many divisions for date sent, returned, for whom, date of acknowledgement of return, and so on, as desired, with space for the places questioned. The card we use has only author, title, sent, received, returned, due, for whom; on the back, the libraries questioned. This card can be used whether one is borrowing or lending altho the use of different colors is advisable. Suppose the book arrives, acknowledgement and postage should be immediately sent, the person requesting it be notified as to its receipt and its date of return, and the card placed in the received file. When due, or before, that person should be reminded, and, if necessary, a renewal requested. When returned to the lending institution, notification of shipment should be made, and the card record be placed in the “Returned” file, or better, kept in a separate file until the lending library acknowledges the return of the book. I need not go into the details of lending books, other than to emphasize the need of accuracy in ascertaining if one has the item in any form at all. The same card record may be used and when the book is returned the card is placed in a “Return of Loans” file. Proper acknowledgements and notifications should always be made promptly. There is, of course, variation in libraries as to methods in notification of postage due. Some one has suggested an anual clearing of accounts—a process necessitating a useless keeping of records. Loan by loan is the only way. When a loan is made, a form telling of its shipment, method of shipment, time limit and financial obligation is sent. This often arrives after the book, due to routine in notification of the clerk doing the typing

as to the postage. This is a step that should be hastened as embarrassment is apt to result over the time limit assumed by the borrowing library. Of course, if a book is requested and the library definitely does not have it or cannot send it, that fact should be promptly forwarded. My experience is that some libraries ignore this. I find that a permanent file of all books borrowed or attempted, comes into use.

What is the best way to ship them? That depends on the size and, to some extent, distance. Express, always collect if a package is being loaned; prepaid, if being returned; registered mail, insured parcel post, and the new, and apparently best mailing method, special handling—all possible. I can even imagine a messenger, as I can imagine and have used a telegraphed request.

Where shall we lend? In 1906, the German government made overtures to the government of the United States in the matter of international loans of manuscript and printed material. The Library of Congress volunteered then to cooperate, and as I understand, is always willing to do so in dealing with the national libraries of other countries. Surely distance has comparatively little to disturb. The larger libraries naturally are looked to by those nearest. Any library is justified in refusing a request which one has reason to feel can be filled from a library nearer the source, or which has obligation to supply the request—as a state library has toward institutions within the state. Indeed, a library should be grateful to have its attention drawn to resources nearby.

During the writing of this paper, a graduate student said farewell as he left to teach in a small middle west college. He lamented that he would be lost without material for research, especially in sets of technical periodicals. When reminded of the interlibrary loan system, he said: "But our library hasn't a thing in it which any other institution would be without." I then



assured him that the system is not on an eye for eye basis.<sup>2</sup> This brings up two points, first, the reluctance of librarians to borrow, perhaps because of the feeling that no recompense can be made, partly to avoid responsibility for borrowed books, or because they have never borrowed. The second matter is that this situation in regard to special periodicals and sets is extremely common in smaller places, and one should not expect it to be otherwise. Yet this should not be too great a handicap to scholars. If the library is reluctant to borrow, when unable to buy, the faculty is justified in extreme measures. An institution that is on good borrowing terms should be almost as attractive to a research student, other things being equal, as a place with all sets available on the spot—a condition seldom possible.

How long shall borrowed items be kept? The day I write, I sent away two small books requesting their return within the week, due to much use here. Other books have been away for several months. One loan of which I know is for the duration of the life of the scholar using it. The question of renewal is a nuisance. In most cases, why set a time limit? As I look over Princeton's loans, one-half, at least, could have stayed away the year, without inconvenience to us. But I fear that if we had not put a limit of a month, that once a year clearing up would have brought apologies for lost volumes or some other disaster. Yes, we would do better to set a generous limit, and in certain cases, write "six months," or even "indefinite." In any case, one must have the right of recall even before the briefest limit has expired. The form requesting a renewal would do well to include the sentence "Unless we hear from you to the contrary, we assume the renewal is granted."

<sup>2</sup> A young instructor in a southern college spent the summer with us recently. On leaving he said, "I'll be glad when we have a hundred thousand volumes in our own library so that we can borrow." His librarian had refused to borrow, using that as an excuse.

What shall be done with a borrowed book? Harvard has the wise statement in red that the books borrowed must be used within the building of the borrowing library. We hope they do not mind our sending by library messenger, some of their books to responsible assistants in department libraries. At Princeton, we have an unwritten rule that all borrowed books shall be used in the building or in a department library with a responsible person in charge. We all take it for granted that reasonable copying by photostat or otherwise is permissible, but more than courtesy demands that the use of an edition for republication or wholesale use of similar sort, demands special permission.

Who shall be qualified to presume to request a loan? Why, anybody. There are few requests by, we will say, undergraduates, which cannot be met by other material owned by the home library. If such a person does request an item not in the library for which there is no good substitute and which is not to be obtained by purchase within the time required, why shouldn't he have that volume, why shouldn't he have the use of the best material, even from the Library of Congress? Undergraduates who are of the type to do the work for which the local library cannot furnish the best material, should have the right to borrow. The present ruling of certain libraries that requests for persons of certain ranking seems to be wholly unnecessary, and without question, conducive to prevarication on the part of the borrowing library or the professor under whom the student is working. The same ruling eliminates graduate students. Whatever may be said about the value of Ph.D. theses, they are, at least theoretically, contributions to knowledge, and, again, why should librarians or professors perjure themselves in order to obtain good material for the producers of these monographs? Indeed, full

professors seem to be the only ones recognized as doing scholarly work. How about the instructor, with less salary and less time for travel, whose very promotion to a scholarly position depends upon the amount of printed material he turns out—must his straw be only the home grown? No, we believe the borrowing library should be trusted to know whether the request is on a good basis. Then let those who have, refuse only on the ground of local use, or else send with a brief time limit—if that is honestly necessary.

What use is interlibrary loan, aside from furnishing straw for bricks? Some libraries have the policy that if a request to them cannot be filled because the book is not owned, effort is made to purchase it. This would hardly be feasible or desirable, it seems to me, if done too systematically, but gaps in one's collection can thus be revealed and filled.

Almost lastly and of most importance—What shall be lent? We agree that books of little cost and easily obtainable in stock cannot be asked with justification. The fact that a book is in print should not prevent its request. For instance, there are expensive books which for infrequent use, a library is not wise to purchase, especially the smaller institutions. Foreign books, for whose purchase time would be too short, and whose use, in the case of smaller libraries, would not justify purchase, should be loaned without comment. Therefore, date of publication should not play too strong a part. Of course, if a book is being used locally, or is really apt to be in local demand, a request of any sort may be refused, or the time limit be very brief. The 1924 report of the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation recommends that duplicates of books be used as largely as possible for lending. I certainly hope that this does

not indicate a belief that only duplicates be lent. Some libraries do not lend volumes of periodicals, a matter mentioned before from the standpoint of the borrower—in other words, material of primary importance by authorities, and not to be obtained in any other form, is withheld from investigators. Any one who works with a scholarly clientele knows what an important part this type of publication takes. In refusing their loan, libraries are, it seems to me, doing needless injury to intellectual cooperation and to productive research. I can see no reason why we should not all regard ourselves as trustees of our possessions for the scholars of our country, indeed of the world. The photostat may help but it cannot always be a substitute. Let me quote some figures for manuscripts lent by the Bibliothèque Nationale. In the year 1906, 321 were lent within Paris, 87 in the Province and 121 to other countries, a total of 529. Between 1897 and 1906, the highest annual total was 714. In 1906, 52 were sent to Germany, 15 to Austria-Hungary, 17 to Italy, 9 to Russia, and 4 ran the risk of being lost in the British Channel. Cannot we be as free in our possessions? Let us look at our stumbling blocks. There is a legal one. Some of our greatest reservoirs are stagnant, as far as most of the country is concerned, because charters or specifications in wills, prevent use, even of ordinary books, outside the home city or even the buildings. One of our greatest specialized libraries, the catalog of which is perhaps the greatest bibliography of its subject in America, is to be used by students of one institution and those able to travel to that city. Impossible, impractical though it may sound, I say that such controllers of great collections should free themselves from their shackles, that legislatures, if necessary, should be appealed to, that legal restrictions be repealed.

Above all, such entanglements should be avoided in the future. Another hindrance to advancing cooperation is the reasonable statement that "our constituency comes first." The rarer the item, the less likely to be any chronic demand at home, the more likely that the person needing it can wait until it is recalled—but when would such an occasion arise? This second hindrance almost verges on the third, which is rare, namely, mere disinclination or, perhaps, an ultra-conservative policy. In the early articles on this subject, one institution, not public, is mentioned because of its generosity. Since then a new policy, based not on increased demand, has been instituted, and the rarity of the item keeps it on the shelf, and I should judge that the label "rare" is not based on a knowledge of the item.

I do not wish it thought that I have been ignorant of past surveys of the subject, or that I am not grateful that progress has been made since 1876, especially as shown in the code recommended and printed in 1917. Inter-library loans are, however, the most concrete evidence of what we are striving for—cooperation. They must, therefore, be spoken of often and since new persons like myself come to places where they are responsible for their institution's part in the system, we must use what has been built, strengthening and adding to the structure.

This paper was not intended to give much new and startling, although I have suggested some minor changes and additions which should be carefully considered. But I will close with emphasis on my plea for abandonment of remnants of timidity in regard to lending, for a development of the actual feeling, the socialistic doctrine, that our books and manuscripts belong to no one institution but are the common property of the intellectual world and that it is our task to facilitate their use.



INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN GREAT BRITAIN<sup>3</sup>

In approaching the question on which I have been asked to speak to you, I propose to follow the practice of the clergy and select a text on which to base my remarks, but I must forsake the usual source of texts and refer you to Horrebow's "*Natural History of Iceland*," published in 1758.

If you will turn to chapter 72 of that famous work you will find that the heading is "Concerning Snakes." The chapter itself is not much longer than its heading and consists of these words:

No snakes of any kind are to be met throughout this island.

If, following a well-known character in Dickens, I now say that "the bearing of this observation lies in the application of it" I might almost resume my seat.

It would not be fair, however, to leave the impression that there were no interlibrary loans of any kind in Great Britain, though I fear it has to be admitted that little has been done towards establishing a system of such loans based on a definite policy.

Let me say at the outset that my observations will be confined chiefly to the municipal or rate supported libraries, and to the reference departments, for I hope there are no library authorities in existence who would refuse the loan of a book from the lending or home-reading department whenever or wherever it may be wanted.

For my present purpose, a reference library is the department in which books must be consulted on the premises and from which they must not be taken away.

In approaching the question of the interlibrary loans, one has first to consider the desirability or otherwise of such loans and to recognize that there is something to be said both for and against.

<sup>3</sup> By Walter Powell, librarian, Birmingham Public Libraries, Birmingham, England.

It is undoubtedly a satisfaction to a student to know that all the books in the library are available for use and for that comparison one with another which is often so necessary. It can be argued that if the inter-loan system grew to any extent many books might be absent at the time they were urgently wanted. My own view is that this difficulty can be overcome for all practical purposes by the terms of the arrangement made for inter-loans. Again it is argued that the books acquired by any particular community are for the benefit of those living within that community and for no others. Such an argument is narrow and illogical.

In Great Britain it is the usual custom to admit readers freely to the reference libraries but to confine the use of the home-reading departments to rate-payers and residents. There has never been any question as to the desirability of allowing non-citizens to consult the books in our reference libraries if they will take the trouble to come to the books. The only debatable point is whether we should send the books to them under certain circumstances, and here opinions differ as I shall try to show.

I am not sure whether it comes within the scope of my subject to discuss the nature of the arrangement to be made as to inter-loans if the principle is approved, but there is one possible internal difficulty to which I wish to refer as I reluctantly believe it to be a real danger and not imaginary. I refer to the possible attitude of the governing bodies towards future purchases. There is some danger, for instance, that expenditure on books might be reduced under the impression that expensive books—which are essential under the present system—could be borrowed under the proposed new arrangement. I believe, however, that all arguments against the policy of interlibrary loans can be guarded against by careful consideration of the terms of any arrangement which may be put forward for consideration.

As to the present position in Great Britain, I propose

to submit a summary of the answers to certain questions which I addressed to twelve of the largest and most representative public libraries in the country, and to draw conclusions therefrom.

The questions and answers were as follows:

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<p>1. Do you lend books from the Reference Library to</p> <p>(a) other libraries</p> <p>(b) individuals?</p>	<p>(a) "Yes" (nine libraries)</p> <p>(b) "No" (one library)</p> <p>(c) "No applications from other libraries but occasionally we lend to individuals" (one library)</p> <p>(d) "Officially No but occasionally the librarian lends books" (one library)</p>
<p>2. If so, do you lend them as a policy or as a courtesy between one library and another?</p>	<p>Only one reply definitely stated that the loans were part of the policy of the library, though another stated that loans had always been made though no resolution authorizing them could be traced.</p> <p>Another reply stated that it was "Not considered advisable to give too much publicity to these concessions in view of destroying the true functions of a reference library. Concessions granted discreetly by the Chief Librarian with the approval of the Committee."</p> <p>(NOTE: The outstanding feature is the fact that practically all loans are "acts of grace" and are certainly not encouraged. On the other hand it is only fair to say that I have always met with a ready response when asking for a book.)</p>

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<p>3. Can you give statistics for, say five years:</p> <p>(a) Number of volumes loaned to other libraries?</p> <p>(b) Number of volumes borrowed from other libraries?</p>	<p>In most cases, no statistics had been kept.</p> <p>In one case 12 volumes had been lent to other libraries and 2581 to individuals chiefly in their own city.</p> <p>In another case 310 volumes had been lent in twelve months and three volumes borrowed from libraries outside the city.</p> <p>Several libraries which had loaned books had not borrowed. (This is not so strange as it appears as my information is from the larger libraries who would be likely to lend but not to borrow from the smaller libraries. At the same time, I was rather surprised at the small amount of borrowing by the larger libraries, judging by my experience at Birmingham.)</p>
<p>4. What is the nature of the volumes loaned?</p>	<p>The answers were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Scientific.</li> <li>b) Unused, or out-of-the-way books.</li> <li>c) Books which are usually available only in large reference libraries.</li> <li>d) Books of research.</li> <li>e) Local history (in two cases).</li> <li>f) All subjects.</li> </ul> <p>(The question is necessarily vague, and so are some of the replies).</p>

I have not included my own city—Birmingham—in the libraries represented by the information given above because I did not wish to mention any other cities or boroughs by name.

So far as Birmingham is concerned we were extra-

ordinarily conservative up to a few years ago and under no circumstances were books loaned from the reference library. If I may be excused the personal note, I may say that, for many years I was a devout believer in this policy and practice perhaps, however, without giving it much consideration. In due course, however, it struck me rather forcibly that it was absurd to have a rule stating that under no circumstances must reference library books be allowed out of the building when there were frequently dozens of them away at the binders for a fortnight or more at a time. In other words, we sent out books for two or three weeks to those who could not use them, and refused them for two or three days to those to whom they would be of service—and all for a scrap of paper. "As Euclid might have said—which is absurd."

The result was a reconsideration of the whole matter with a decision that reference library books might be lent to other libraries but not to individuals. Books which were irreplaceable were excluded as well as books in frequent demand in our own libraries. The system has now been in operation for seven years during which time no request for a loan has been refused.

I may say that we specifically exclude individuals as borrowers because of the difficulty which might arise in getting these books back, lending library experience having shown how indifferent certain readers can be to their obligations. We have had no case so far where the nearest library has not been satisfactory to the applicant but I am sure that a personal application from an individual who was not within reasonable reach of a responsible library would receive sympathetic consideration. As already explained, these facts and figures are from twelve of the principal public libraries of Great Britain, and I think bear out the statement that interlibrary loans are not generally part of a system.

Quite recently, however, an attempt has been made to organize real cooperation between the libraries scattered



up and down the country though unfortunately in the limited field of university and college libraries.

In the summer of 1923, the Association of University Teachers appointed a Library Co-operative Committee and part of the result of their efforts up to date is embodied in the following circular published in February, 1926:

#### JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY CO-OPERATION

As the outcome of a Conference of University Teachers and Librarians which was held in January, 1925, an Enquiry Office has been established with the object of tracing scarce publications which may be wanted by investigators in any part of Great Britain. Nearly all the modern university libraries are taking an active part in this movement, and several non-university libraries of a specialist character have expressed their willingness to co-operate. Participation in the movement entails no financial responsibility as the expenses of the Enquiry Office are being met out of special grants made by the Association of University Teachers and the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust.

The following are the conditions under which books may be borrowed:

- (a) All loans to be made from library to library.
- (b) Publications borrowed not to be used outside the borrowing library.
- (c) The borrowing library to pay the cost of transportation both ways, and to accept complete responsibility for the publications borrowed.  
*(In the very unlikely event of loss or damage it is understood that, unless other arrangements have been made, the borrowing library if unable to replace the publication concerned, will accept the valuation of the lending library and pay the sum demanded as compensation.)*
- (d) Each publication to be borrowed for a restricted period only (ordinarily, say, for three weeks), but for a shorter or longer period at the discretion of the lending library.
- (e) Certain categories of publications to be excluded from the operation of the scheme, e.g.:
  - i. Books of reference and other books in constant demand.
  - ii. Books and periodicals which should be in the possession of every university Library.
  - iii. Current text-books and manuals.
  - iv. Such publications as the library applied to may be unwilling to lend owing to their rarity or value, or for some other particular reason.

Up to the present fourteen British and four foreign libraries have signified their willingness to loan books under this scheme, though Birmingham is so far the only municipal library included. I believe, however, that others are under consideration.

Up to date, about three hundred applications have been made for loans chiefly of out-of-the-way books, and about 70 per cent of the books required have been found in one or other of the libraries concerned.

The Central Library for Students exists to supply standard books (non-fiction) costing not less than 6/, to students who cannot obtain them in any other way. The library is supported by voluntary contributions and makes no charge for the use of the books, but borrowers pay carriage both ways. It is developed out of a library of 1392 volumes established at Toynbee Hall by the Workers' Educational Association for the purpose of supplying books of this class to University Tutorial and Workers' Educational Association classes. Subsequently the scheme was developed on more ambitious lines and help was received from the Carnegie Trustees. In their Report for 1925-26, the committee record that the stock had grown from 1392 in 1916 to 30,824 in 1925-26, and that the issue during the year amounted to 44,196 compared with 2005 in the first year. The issue of 44,196 was made up as follows:

	VOLUMES
255 Municipal Libraries .....	11,160
47 County Libraries .....	12,124
31 Other Libraries .....	1,345
357 Groups of Students .....	15,205
432 Individual Students .....	4,362
Total	44,196

The comparatively rapid growth of the library and the progressive policy of its committee are evidence of its value, but it will have to grow to many times its present size before it can be regarded as a reservoir from which the larger libraries can draw to any extent.

So far as I know, I have summarised the present situation of interlibrary loan in Great Britain. Personally, I look forward to a development in the near future as a result of the lengthy deliberations of the Board of Education Committee on Public Libraries.

This is anticipation—intelligent or otherwise—I know, as the committee has not yet reported, but it seems certain that so important a question will receive serious consideration. In the early days of the library movement, the majority of librarians were said to have been seriously concerned at the use made of their books, and I can remember the time when every effort was made to spare the best editions. Today, a more enlightened policy prevails everywhere and if there is still some distance to go, I believe it is generally recognized that the ultimate aim is the dissemination of knowledge to the greatest possible degree, an aim which is not consistent with a parochial policy. If my belief is correct interlibrary loans should play an important part in future development.

### INTERLIBRARY LOANS IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE<sup>4</sup>

If I were to deal with the question of interlibrary loan in Continental Europe to its full extent, I should have to give the details, first of interlibrary loans within each separate country of Europe, and then internationally, between country and country. This could not be done within the time allotted, even if I could do it; but I have not had the time nor the opportunity to gather the information. It would take, I think, about three months of hard labour and constant travel.

As I believe that details are always more instructive than generalities, I have chosen to present to you a

<sup>4</sup> By A. G. Drachmann, assistant librarian, University Library, Copenhagen.

single specimen, from which you may gather how it is done in one country of Europe; and for obvious reasons I have chosen Denmark.

First there is the question of interlibrary loans within Denmark.

To understand the Danish system it is necessary to keep in mind, that great reference libraries are unknown in that country; the three large learned libraries, the Royal Library and the University Library, both in Copenhagen, and the State Library in Aarhus, are lending libraries, and will send most of their books to anybody who has a guarantor, or is himself in a position to guarantee. This means that any public library can get the books for use within the library, and this means that any book found in any public library in Denmark (with one exception) is available in any other public library in Denmark to the person who will pay the postage. A parcel will never be more than two days to get from Copenhagen to any other point in the country; the postage will average 25c either way. The libraries are constantly on the alert to get a reduction for book parcels, but they have not been successful as yet.

The proceeding is as follows: A reader wanting a book that is not found in his own public library—say one of the eight hundred parochial libraries—fills out a blank and waits for results. The librarian will send the order to the nearest central library—there are twenty-five central libraries in Denmark. If the book is not there, the central library will send on the application to the State Library at Aarhus. All Danish books are found here, provided they are not too old and rare, also a good collection of foreign books. If the book is not in the State Library, the application is returned to the central library, which sends it on—as a last resource—to Copenhagen, where are the two largest libraries and countless smaller, special libraries. To avoid delay

the application is sent to the State Library Commission, where they will seek by telephone, to ascertain which library has the book in question. When it is found, the book is sent by the library direct to the parochial library that asked for it from the beginning, so as to lose no time. The book is returned the same way—direct.

As the State Library at Aarhus has by far the greatest share in these interlibrary loans, I will give the figures for the last years:

1923: .....	6563	vols.
1924: .....	9727	"
1925: .....	12311	" <sup>5</sup>

It is growing fast!

But if the book is not found in Denmark at all, what then? We now come to the question of international loans of books in Europe.

Only two Danish libraries borrow books from outside to any large extent, the Royal Library and the University Library; the books to be used in the reading room only. On looking up the records of the Royal Library I find that during the last ten years it has borrowed books from no less than eighty-six different libraries outside Denmark. Sweden, Norway and Germany are the countries most in use; I shall give you the figures:

There was borrowed, during the last ten years, from

Norway .....	155	books,	...	83	manuscripts
Sweden .....	278	"	...	218	"
Germany .....	323	"	...	43	"
					"
	756	"		344	"

On the other hand the Royal Library sent out to different foreign countries 1066 books and 255 manuscripts during the same period.

Besides the three countries mentioned above I have

<sup>5</sup> At the time of the Conference the last figure was not yet published. I owe it to the courtesy of my colleague, Mr. Sejr, that I was able to give it then.

found records of loans from Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, England, Finland, France, Holland, Italy, Poland, Spain and Switzerland; but they are very small in number. It is clear that a Scandinavian country like Denmark will borrow much from the two other Scandinavian countries, Norway and Sweden; also that Germany, our neighbor, with its enormous output of scientific and learned literature, will contribute very much; but when you learn, that Germany has lent 323 books and 43 manuscripts during ten years, and that France has lent, during the same ten years, no books, and only two manuscripts, you will understand that there must be a real reason for this.

There is. If you borrow a book from a German library, your library will write to the library in question; the book is then sent by parcel post, insured; and may be returned the same way. So also with Norway, Sweden, Holland, Belgium, Poland, Austria and Switzerland. But if you want a book from France, it must be got the diplomatic way. That is to say: the library writes to the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Education writes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which communicates with the Danish Legation at Paris; the Danish Legation writes to the French Foreign Office, which in turn sends on the request to the Bibliothèque Nationale. The book is then sent the whole way round, from office to office, till it reaches the library.—A Danish professor once wanted a manuscript sent from Paris. It took nine months, and cost him some \$12. The librarian returned it direct—cost 50c.

Other countries do not allow their books outside their boundaries at all, Great Britain, f.i., and Italy, Spain and others. Yet exceptions have been made, as shown by the records of the Royal Library.

This matter has been taken up by the Commission for Intellectual Cooperation under the League of Nations. It had taken up a lot of questions: central cataloging,



reduction of postage for books meant for libraries, empowering libraries to send their books through customs without delay, and so on. While I expect that the "open" countries will be quite willing to listen to these proposals, and so make conditions already very favorable better still, I have my doubts as to the results in the "closed" countries. But we can, of course, always hope for the best.

The question of interlibrary loans has another aspect: how to know where to find the book wanted.

Within Denmark the question is at once: is the book Danish or not? If it is Danish, it will be in the State Library in Aarhus, provided it is not too old or rare; at any rate it *must* be in the Royal Library and the University Library, the two old copyright libraries of the country. If it is a foreign book, the question is more complicated; the large libraries do not send out printed catalogs, except the Copenhagen Public Library—which is the exception, that never sends books out of town.

The only help is the printed accession catalog, issued yearly since 1901; in this are found, year by year, all books printed outside Denmark acquired by the learned libraries in Copenhagen, not the two large ones only, but also the smaller, special libraries. It would be a great help, of course, if there could be a register, say every five years; but this has been impossible on account of the cost. But now the State Library Commission is making a written card index of the whole of the accession catalog, which will be a very great help to all the libraries.

In the case of foreign libraries it is the same. There are national libraries where you are sure to find all possible books published within the country in question, so that the bibliographies of the country will serve as a catalog. For books or periodicals in other languages you will have to consult the yearly accessions catalogs, if

there are any. Or you may simply write to the library in question and ask!

To sum up I might say that I think these international interlibrary loans of the greatest value to the students and scholars of the country. Their relatively small number—not quite one hundred a year—goes to show, that the Royal Library normally is quite able to supply the demand made upon it; but when a book is found abroad only—and no library in the world can cope with the enormous output of books of the present days—it is surely better to send the book to the man, at a minimum cost, than to demand that the man must travel for days in order to read, perhaps, a few pages of a book.

### THE GOLDEN RULE AND INTERLIBRARY LOANS \*

The topic of interlibrary loans would need no discussion if librarians were true Christians. If borrowers and lenders could be guided by the Golden Rule no code of practice would be necessary. The strong would be proud and glad to help the weak. The weak would make no frivolous or unreasonable requests of the strong. The borrower would be careful to ask *plainly* for what he wants; to pay all costs; to take good care of what is lent him; to acknowledge its receipt; to return it promptly, carefully wrapped; and to be decently grateful. The lender would do his part promptly and cheerfully.

But, alas, librarians are little if any better than plain run-of-the-mill humans. Some of us now and then are lazy or peevish or forgetful or in a hurry or willing to let George do it or on the lookout lest we be imposed upon. These mean little characteristics of poor

\* Discussion by Asa Don Dickinson, librarian of the University of Pennsylvania.

old *homo sapiens* too often take the joy out of the inter-library loan.

Would it not be well to revise and extend the "Code of Practice" presented by N. D. C. Hodges in 1917, so that we might have a standard of what is good form? The new code could be printed in a leaflet and distributed by the American Library Association. Then when one of us offends against one of the Golden Rule principles upon which it is based the offence could be delicately and impersonally reproved by sending the offender a marked copy of the code.

Although my own library is neither wealthy nor very large, I am proud to say that in these matters it belongs to the creditor rather than the debtor class. Our "exports" exceed our "imports" three or four volumes to one. Last year we lent 465 volumes to 66 libraries, and borrowed but 124 volumes from 28 libraries. We hope the 66 libraries profited by the books which we let them have. We certainly are grateful to the 28 libraries which helped us.

As the balance of trade is in our favor, and as our interlibrary loans increased 40 per cent in the past year while our interlibrary borrowings diminished, I may not be misunderstood if I submit for your consideration three or four hints and principles.

1. The library which borrows should make it a point of honor not to become a burden to any one lender.

2. Certain libraries have special claims upon and responsibilities toward certain other libraries. The state library and the large public libraries of a given state should show special consideration to the small public libraries within their state. Similarly, the one or more big university libraries of a state should be specially anxious to help the small college libraries of that state. And I venture to think also that the Library of Congress (which is called our national library) has obligations to the whole country; and so in a lesser degree has the greatest of our university libraries. These big

brother duties of the Library of Congress and Harvard would be more freely recognized by them if these institutions could feel confident that only such demands are made upon them as cannot be met by sources of supply nearer at hand.

3. Broadcasting one's inquiries is in most instances unwarrantable. Let us not make a practice of speeding service to our client at the expense of *unnecessarily* troubling several of our colleagues. No librarian can afford to waste time.

4. The lender should be able to take it for granted that requests are not made on frivolous grounds. Interlibrary loans are just as troublesome to the borrowing as to the lending library. What may appear frivolous to the lender may with good reason seem quite otherwise to the borrower, who alone knows the circumstances of each case. As a university librarian I venture the assertion that requests made to advance the researches of graduate students are not *prima facie* frivolous, and I respectfully ask the authorities at Harvard and the Library of Congress to consider this point of view. As a university librarian I am ready to take for granted the propriety of requests which my colleagues forward to me. I should not be outraged to discover that even a lowly undergraduate is the person who is being helped.

5. The percentage of loss in interlibrary loans is so small that we should stand ready to lend bound volumes of periodicals in most cases. It seems unwise to lend freely current numbers (1) because they are so apt to be needed at home, and (2) because binding is apt to be held up indefinitely.

6. The photostat sometimes solves the problem of service in the case of current periodicals or rariora. So does a typed transcript. Perhaps free photostat service, or photostat service at less than cost, should be the recourse of the strictly reference library which needs to borrow now and then, like the rest of us, but which is forbidden by its charter to lend. (Who knows? Perhaps

big bills for photostating would stimulate the amendment of such charters.)

7. Let us not be haunted by the thought of reciprocity. This is all very well between libraries of approximately the same size. But big libraries will often lend to little ones. Why should they not? The adult feeds and clothes the child, and neither party troubles about reciprocity. *If the child has decent manners and makes as little trouble as possible*, no more is expected of him. This is no age of tooth and claw.

8. As for time limits, would it not be well for the borrower to state always for how long a period the loan is desired, and for the lender to assent to this as often or as far as he can? I feel that the periods of loan should be kept as short as possible. Long, indefinite loans beget lost books and disgruntled lenders.

Mr. Young gets to the root of the matter when he says we should regard ourselves as trustees of our holdings for the scholars of our country, or indeed of the whole world.

If we could all see ourselves in this light, and if borrowers and lenders both could keep in mind and always apply the principles of the Golden Rule no discussion of this topic would be necessary. But we are none of us angels, and some of us are just poor miserable sinners. So let us have a Bible or up-to-date code of decency and good form by which to regulate our conduct. I am for a revision of the Hodges codex.

## INTERLIBRARY LENDING AS PRACTICED IN THE CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY<sup>1</sup>

The title of this paper on the official program is "Interlibrary Loans in the Large Public Library." I have limited my discussion, however, to an account of the

<sup>1</sup> By Gilbert O. Ward, technical librarian, Cleveland Public Library.

practice in the institution with which I am connected, the Cleveland Public Library.

I should further explain that I am not an authority on interloans, and have no special connection with them in the Cleveland library. Credit for the facts of routine and statistics and helpful suggestions belongs to Miss Anna Jane Sloan, the Head of the Branch Loan Section of the Loan Division. These and facts from other sources I have simply put in order and supplied the framework for.

Some questions which suggest themselves in a discussion of interlibrary loans as practiced by a particular library are:

What policy is followed?

How much lending and borrowing is actually done?

What is the mechanism of lending and how is it related to the library organization?

And finally, how far may the practice be considered typical of the practice of other libraries?

To insure the proper and profitable use of interloan privileges from the lending standpoint it is necessary to define and follow some consistent policy. Broadly speaking, the policy of the Cleveland Public Library is to lend books under certain restrictions, to other libraries except high school libraries, in Ohio and adjoining states. This applies only to libraries which are properly organized. Further restrictions and conditions are that

1. The book asked for must as a rule be one out of the ordinary course, not such a one as the applicant library itself might be expected to supply.

2. It must be required for purpose of serious research.

3. It must be a book which may be sent without injury by mail or express.

4. It must be a book which can be spared without inconvenience to the library's own readers.



5. The transportation charges both ways are paid by the borrowing library.

Before taking up the application of these rules in practice, a word is necessary on the organization of the Cleveland Main Library. We are organized, as some of you may know, on what we call a divisional plan. We have, for example, a division of Fine Arts, of Sociology, of Science and Technology, of History, of Literature, and of Philosophy and Religion. Each of these divisions contains both circulating and reference material and is administered by its own permanent head and staff. There is also a General Reference Division, a Popular Library consisting of fiction and temporary loans of popular works from other divisions, and a Periodical Division which has charge of current periodicals, chiefly of a general character. Finally should be mentioned the John G. White Collection of Folklore and Orientalia, which is in itself a reference library of a very scholarly character.

Subject always to the approval of the head of the main library, the head of each division passes upon requests for the loan of books from that division and decides whether they can be complied with. Hence, since the collection of each division and the demands upon it are peculiar, the lending policies of individual divisions differ more or less among themselves.

For example, the John G. White Collection of Folklore and Orientalia is a scholarly collection, of interest from a scholarly standpoint to a limited number of Clevelanders. Hence, the head of the division, Mr. Thayer, is able to lend liberally to scholars through other libraries, without regard to the general library policy of confining loans to Ohio and adjoining states.

In the Division of Science and Technology, on the other hand, the collection is built up definitely to meet the city's industrial needs. Because of this close con-

nection with current, local demands, the lending of technical material has to be much more closely restricted.

These examples illustrate the necessary divergencies in practice among different parts of the same institution.

The number of interlibrary loans handled by the library is possibly not great compared with those recorded for other public libraries of comparable size. In 1925, we borrowed 68 books and lent 429. Of books lent, a large proportion came from the White Collection. A good many books of a less special character were lent to other Ohio libraries, chiefly in response to requests made on behalf of such institutions by the Ohio State Library. With the steadily increasing efficiency and ability of the State Library under its present administration to meet demands for material, it seems possible that loans of this type will fall off. Although we are glad to be of help to other smaller libraries in Ohio when we can, the home demands on our popular books prevent us from interpreting as liberally as we should like the proviso that books should not be such as the applicant library itself might be expected to supply.

As to the sixty-eight books borrowed from other libraries, all were requested for purposes of special research.

In both borrowing and lending, a point worth noting is that the figures for interlibrary loans represent a much smaller proportion of readers than is the case with figures for ordinary circulation. For example, fourteen or fifteen of the sixty-eight volumes referred to above were for a gentleman who was making a very thorough study of the history of the dog, especially in the British Isles. A couple of years ago we lent a hundred-odd volumes of poetry to an anthologist.

In borrowing books from other libraries, the course of events is about as follows: A reader discovers a reference to a desirable book or article which is not in the Cleveland Public Library or other local library. Or

he may have obtained his reference elsewhere and brought it in on the possibility of finding the material itself on the library shelves. The division assistant who handles the inquiry recognizes the material as probably important and the request as serious, and, after making certain that the volume is not available in other local libraries<sup>8</sup> offers to attempt to borrow it out-of-town. At the same time she explains the conditions of the service. A memorandum is made of the reader's name, address, and telephone number, together with as full and exact a reference to the material needed as is possible. This memorandum is turned over to the Branch Loan Division for action.

The Branch Loan Division then proceeds to locate the book as actually or probably in some out-of-town library through the Union List of Serials and other aids, and general knowledge of library sources. It next sends a request for loan, specifying as exactly as possible the material required, and, if it seems desirable the reasons for the request.

When the book is received a formal acknowledgment is mailed to the lending library with the postage refund in the case of books which have been received by mail. The reader who has made the request is notified.

When the book is returned, a postal form to that effect is sent to the lending library.

A permanent card record is kept of all books borrowed. On each card are entered the dates of receipt and return, the name of the borrower, a memorandum of carriage charges, and a note of whether carriage was by express or mail.

A card list is kept of lending libraries, in which are entered the names of the libraries and a note of their special resources.

<sup>8</sup> The Ohio State Library was abolished as such, by failure of the 1927 legislature to provide for its being continued.—(Editor.)

A file is kept also of the leading rules of the libraries from which we borrow most frequently. Readers are required to observe these rules in their use of books.

In the lending process, we use three postal forms, (1) a notice of shipment, (2) an acknowledgment that the volume has been returned, and (3) a statement of inability to lend. We also have a multigraphed statement which explains the conditions of the interloan service, and which is sent to a library on the occasion of its first request.

In connection with interloans to other libraries I should mention our photostat service. We now own a photostat outfit which is maintained for the accommodation of both in-town and out-of-town readers in copying library material. When we are asked for a loan from our own shelves which is impracticable, we are often able to suggest a photographic copy as a substitute. This enables us to make available material which could not itself be lent.

Contrariwise, when we have requests from readers to borrow from other libraries, we mention the possibility of procuring photographic copies if the circumstances suggest it and we know that they can be obtained.

Both the interlibrary loans and the photostat service described are actually managed by the Branch Loan Section, the Main Library's administrative unit which, as its name implies, looks after the loans between the Main Library and the library branches. The Branch Loan Section is in turn under the general supervision of the Loan Division of the Main Library.

As to how far the practice of the Cleveland Public Library may be typical of that in other large public libraries, I cannot speak; I doubt, however, if it presents any important essential features which could be called original.

INTERLIBRARY LOANS BY STATE  
LIBRARIES<sup>9</sup>

The New York State Library does two very distinct kinds of interlibrary lending, and because one kind is so different from that contemplated by the Code (*A.L.A. Bulletin*. 10:349-51) and from the more or less standardized practice which is the basis for discussion here today, it seems worth while to describe it briefly.

To libraries outside New York State, the State Library of course lends in conformity with the Code and current practice just as it expects similar courtesies in return. To libraries within the state, it lends with little or no regard for the Code and current practice, attempting in some measure to improve and equalize library facilities throughout the state. A few of the differences are the following:

1. Loans within the state are more liberal in quantity. Whether lending so-called "traveling libraries," package libraries, clippings or individual books, the more active and enlightened state libraries probably pay very little attention to the number lent. From twenty-five to seventy-five or more volumes often are lent to a single library. These state libraries recognize and welcome their obligation to furnish books not easily available locally to every citizen of the state, but prefer to do this through cooperation with local libraries rather than through direct loans to individuals. And so if every local library in the state is potentially a branch of the state library and ready to receive and relay to the state library all local requests for books, it follows that the only limit which the state library can fairly set upon the number to be lent will depend upon, first, its resources, and, second, the borrowing library's pains and accuracy in observing a few simple rules. The New York State

<sup>9</sup> By J. I. Wyer, director, New York State Library.

plan attempts to narrow even these limits by buying liberally duplicate copies and titles not in the library, on request and by furnishing standard blanks and forms for the service.

2. It is more liberal in period of loan.

3. Under the Code, the borrowing library pays all charges. In New York State, and perhaps in some other states, the state library pays going charges. Even the one-time fees or fixed charges for traveling libraries have been abolished.

4. The usual restriction limiting the use of books to the buildings of the borrowing library is disregarded.

5. Trivial, inexpensive books, and frequently books which doubtless *are* available locally, are lent with little question or investigation. In New York State, while the State Library proper neither buys nor lends to other libraries current fiction and juveniles, yet the Library Extension Division, under the same administration and in the same building, lends both to libraries. In the large view, this probably is a mistaken policy. The state could better use the money now spent for fiction and juveniles and the administration of them in and as traveling libraries, to prosecute a vigorous campaign for county libraries and then lay upon such libraries the entire responsibility for the supply of the lighter literature. The position of the State Library as the central reserve of the state system would remain the same as now.

5. Few questions are ever asked and little thought is given to "serious studious purpose." No attempt is made, e.g., to say that graduate students or octogenarians or babies in arms shall or shall not be direct beneficiaries from the loan. The New York State Library, however, recognizes its special obligations to scholarship in another way. It lends directly and without formality to professional men of every kind: teachers, doctors, nurses, preachers, engineers, lawyers, librarians, etc.



Whenever the state requires examination and registration as prerequisites to practicing a profession, the opportunity and conditions for special library service are apparent for the official records of those entitled to practice these professions are all in the same department with the State Library.

Personally, I join with Mr. Young and Dr. Dickinson in their plea for a much less rigid limitation in this matter than is now enforced by several of the largest libraries. There is but one limitation to interlibrary loan that to my mind is valid and that limitation is not in the Code. I would write into the Code this provision: no loans shall be made to any library that does not itself grant similar loans. The other provisions of the Code might well be written with a view of promoting rather than repressing interlibrary relations. In view of immensely increased demands that will come if adult education and extramural study become popular, the broadest policy of library comity and cooperation are essential. The day when a great library may "live unto itself" is past.

If you ask reasons for differences in interlibrary loan practice within and without New York State, or are curious as to whether they represent differing theories of interlibrary lending, it can only be said that loans outside the state have naturally and normally been governed by the Code, although we have frequently gone beyond its limitations and desire its liberalization. Loans inside the state are governed by a strong sense of the obligations of the state (and the State Library as the instrument of the state) toward all libraries and, indeed, to all individual students within the state. These obligations are far stronger than those between library and library the country over. To illustrate: the chief difference between the rules which Harvard and the Library of Congress (to cite the two institutions which have had most to do with setting the practice for interlibrary

loans) observe and those which govern state libraries' lending within their own states, is one of obligation; in the one case obligation between libraries and scholars or among scholars, in the other the obligation of the state to promote education and libraries as the instruments of education and to furnish opportunities for reading and study to its entire state wide tax-paying constituency.

### INTERLIBRARY LOANS (STATEMENT FOR FORTHCOMING A.L.A. TEXTBOOK ON REFERENCE WORK)

Most libraries are willing to lend books to other libraries. There is no central library, office or bureau which supervises or clears this work or makes rules governing the details of its practice. There has been much discussion of this matter since Mr. S. S. Green first proposed it in this country (*Library Journal*. 1:15), and there has grown up a certain uniformity in practice which is best stated in what is sometimes referred to as the "existing code." This is a report in the *A.L.A. Bulletin*, 1916, 10:349-51. A group of interesting and careful preliminary statements of the purpose of such loans is in *A.L.A. Bulletin*, 1912, 6:96-101 and should be studied with the "code." Recent full statements of the rules of six large libraries (five of which borrowed and lent over twenty-seven thousand volumes last year) appear in *A.L.A. "Survey."* 2:223-9. This literature all has to do with loans for the use of mature scholars for declared serious studious purposes, though even this statement is further restricted by the Library of Congress to "*unusual* books to aid research calculated to advance the boundaries of knowledge." With these restrictions, American libraries are less liberal than European in this matter. Mr. Bostwick in the last edition of

<sup>10</sup> By J. I. Wyer, director, New York State Library.

his "American Public Library" (p. 80) says "One thing that interferes with free interchange at present is the fact that most large libraries refuse to lend certain books and certain classes of books. There is no way of ascertaining these in advance, and a librarian cannot therefore promise a client definitely to obtain a book by interlibrary loan." Two interesting sessions of the College and Reference Section of the American Library Association discussed this question at Atlantic City in October, 1926 and revealed considerable dissatisfaction, even impatience with the conservatism of the two libraries, Harvard and the Library of Congress (which have had most to do with fixing the present practices), and this even after listening to two prepared statements from representatives of these libraries who evidently felt themselves to be on the defensive.

All of the above and the literature cited refers to one kind of interlibrary loan. There is another and very different kind which lends many thousand more books than the first and which pays little or no attention to some of the rules in the "code." This is the lending done by such state libraries as those in Ohio, Oregon and New York, by some state universities and library commissions, by many considerable libraries to smaller neighbors. In such loans the time limit is more liberal, the sending library (under parcel post) usually pays going charges and exacts no refund, the use of the books is not restricted to the building of the borrowing library, trivial or inexpensive books are sometimes lent and proof is not always insisted upon that the books sent are not available locally, few questions are ever asked as to "enlarging the boundaries of knowledge." In the second sort of interlibrary loan the idea appears to be to encourage rather than repress the practice.

In both plans it has been found that the two objections oftenest urged against interlibrary lending, i.e. loss in transit and call for the book while it is gone, in practice are much less than was first expected.

It is also unquestionably true that many borrowing libraries are careless in their specifications, thoughtless in their requests and do not usually (as would be well) list the libraries already asked or state that they have tried all likely nearby libraries.

Despite a not wholly satisfactory status interlibrary loans are increasing and offer through one or both varieties a very substantial addition to the reference facilities of any library.

### INTERLIBRARY LOANS FOR SMALL PUBLIC AND FOR COUNTY LIBRARIES <sup>11</sup>

Interlibrary loans are an absolute necessity to the small library as without them no small library could do research or reference work. We have in our state established a system by means of which any library may borrow from any other library in the state through the Public Library Commission. We also have the privilege of borrowing from libraries in other states and have largely availed ourselves of this privilege especially in the case of the New York Public Library. Princeton University and Rutgers University lend us freely from their collections. Demands for loans cover every range of human interest and so far with the cooperation of individuals as well as libraries we have not had to leave any call unfilled except for books on genealogy. We advise local and county libraries to depend on such loans for the unusual request. To cover one subject for research in a county library it was necessary to borrow from seven libraries, among them the Library of Congress. Library buildings in two towns have been given by the president of a great manufacturing company in gratitude for the books borrowed by the local library for the use of experts on his staff. Books were so loaned last year upon more than ten thousand requests for study or research

<sup>11</sup> By Sarah Askew, N. J. Free Public Library Commission.

in different lines. When a request is received from an individual living in a town or a county with a library he is referred to his local library and, in order that he may find material at the library when he calls, books upon the subject are immediately assembled and sent to that library even at the risk of duplicating books already on the shelves. When these books belong to the Public Library Commission or the State Library they are loaned for two months with the privilege of renewing for two months. When they belong to another library the Commission complies with the rules of that library. Arrangements have been made by the Newark Free Public Library and the Trenton Public Library so to extend the time of the loan that the period of transportation and reshipment by the commission may be covered. This central system of borrowing has been found best in this state because it is impossible for small libraries to know where certain books can be found. Transportation to the library is paid by the commission. Criticism has been made that it would be much better to send the students to the large library. This is not often possible as the money required is needed by the students for other purposes, particularly by ministers, school teachers and other professional people working on theses for doctor's degrees. A number of authors of text books, histories and treatises on economics and sociology find it impossible to leave their homes to consult the books of large libraries. Where books cannot be loaned we have copies made of certain pages with a photostat. The commission bears the expense of the copy and asks that it be returned. A rather curious result of this interloan system is that a number of professors in nearby universities and other professional people leave certain work for the vacation period, depending upon the small libraries or county libraries near their summer homes to borrow the necessary books for them. In the making of the literary map of New Jersey it was found that a number of books had been written by famous authors in this state in this way.

It is not however the isolated case which makes this a valuable system but the rank and file of borrowers whom it aids in preparing for graduate work, in following out lines of research necessary to the success of their jobs or in doing original work along some line. It is valuable in that it enables the library to aid the governing body in welfare and civic work to furnish local teachers with books which keep them abreast of the times.

It saves to the state at large by this interchange of books thousands of dollars each year, keeps books in constant circulation and encourages the spirit of study.

If universities cooperated with libraries more extensively in this work it would be possible to build up in each state a system by means of which the remotest corner would feel the work of the university and profit by its learning. By lending through the authorized library unit of the district a library center is being built up which will reach many and, thereby, public support of libraries is encouraged. This creates ten students to the one making the first inquiry.

A university president being shown the series of letters from a man living in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey commented: "That man has given himself a university education" and when the chairman of the New Jersey Library Commission assured him that many of the books loaned to this man came from his own university, he answered that this had given him the heartening he needed because he had begun to feel that their work was bounded by the walls of the campus and forgotten by most when they left.

## INTERLIBRARY LOAN FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE LENDING LIBRARY <sup>12</sup>

Considering that this is a conference of university and reference librarians, it appears that "the question

<sup>12</sup> By F. W. Ashley, superintendent of the reading room, Library of Congress.



before the House," so far as concerns the Library of Congress, "boils down" to the subject discussed at the last Mid-Winter Conference in Chicago, December 31, 1925: "Can the Library of Congress be persuaded to approve interlibrary loans for graduate students?" That is in fact the burning question that has presented itself to me oftener than any other in my eleven years experience in the conduct of an interlibrary loan service, possibly the largest among American libraries both in volume of material handled and in extent of territory covered. To the matter of loans for graduate students I shall therefore endeavor to confine myself, since time fails even for an adequate presentation of this particular phase of the general subject.

The 1917 Report of the American Library Association Committee on Coordination said (among many other good things): "Before applying to a library for loans one *should consider what that library is and what it is doing.*"

Until borrowers and lenders understand each other's purposes and problems, there can be no satisfactory *modus vivendi* between them.

What, then, is the Library of Congress? A more extended statement prepared in answer to that question must be omitted, and this must now suffice:

Established in 1800 as a legislative library for the use of Congress, still functioning as such to an ever increasing degree, the Library of Congress has in the course of one hundred and twenty-five years become in all but legal name the National Library of the United States, "our finest national possession" as Albert Nock recently termed it. Its collections of books, now numbering 3,420,000 volumes are growing at a rate in excess of 100,000 volumes annually. Its net accessions last year were 134,580 volumes—or one volume every four minutes, day and night, week days, Sundays and holidays, 24 hours per day for 365 days.

The primary obligation of this library is obviously to its creator, Congress; its next is to serve the nation, by collecting and preserving and making available for reference all that is significant in American literature, and all that is worth while in world literature. Scholars resorting to it from all parts of our country expect to find upon its shelves any book which it is known to have acquired. In meeting that obligation the circulation of books is not a help. A national library that lends books forces some sort of a compromise between the interests of the passing and oncoming generations.

The Library of Congress, in the earnest endeavor to aid serious investigators who can not carry on their researches within its walls, has been for years maintaining a considerable circulation service. The beneficiaries of the *local* circulation include first of all Congress and all the officials connected with it, the higher officials in the Executive and Judicial departments, the Diplomatic Corps. All these, privileged by statute, are borrowers unrestricted as to quantity and quality. The needs of serious research workers outside these specially privileged classes are also met by loans to all the governmental, academic, and research libraries in the District of Columbia, and to about five hundred individual permit-holders engaged in special research work that can not be carried on within our walls. A mere enumeration of the groups benefited by this service would use up too much of your time.

What is the Library of Congress doing for the inter-library loan?

In the year ending June 30, 1926, it lent to 682 other libraries in the United States, Canada, Italy, Germany and Norway a few more than 20,000 volumes for serious use. Our borrowings last year from libraries outside the District of Columbia broke our record, for we borrowed 48 volumes—30 of them from Yale for the use of our

Catalog Division. The library of Congress may, therefore, be called a lending rather than a borrowing library.

Of the 20,000 books lent to other libraries, about 3,000 went to 504 libraries outside the District of Columbia; 17,000 went to libraries inside the District, for serious use and not for recreation or cultural purposes (for this is not a public lending library).

Can not the Library of Congress now extend to graduate students the benefits of the interlibrary loan? This was the subject of your Chicago Conference of last winter. In his acknowledgment of your Secretary's report to the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Putnam said:

Our present "rule" as to the needs of students engaged in post-graduate work which may in cases amount to original research and result in a real contribution to knowledge, is (like most of our rules) to be regarded rather as an existing practice, due to present necessity, than a definitive conclusion.

I have spent much time in preparing an explanation of that "present necessity" which restricts our practice, in the hope that a better understanding of our problems would make clear to all that our present position is not due to any lack of sympathy, nor any lack of understanding of the problem presented to you by your throngs of eager, ambitious students, nor any lack of appreciation of their work. There isn't time for that explanatory statement today; so we must ask you to accept our repeated declaration that necessity has forced us hitherto to forego a service which of itself would be a pleasure as well as a privilege.

But I must point out that in numerous cases we have aided graduate students by loans for thesis work. As an instance, we lent to a university library, now urgent in promoting the present appeal for expansion, more than thirty volumes in six weeks for the use of one individual candidate for the doctoral degree, known to us to be such. Our chief reward in that case was to have our "inconsistency" gently pointed out to us by that borrowing library. The following extract from our reply may serve a good purpose here:

That charges of inconsistencies in our practice can be maintained (we cheerfully admit them), is only proof that we do not drastically apply the formula as to colleges and universities. We have no inflexible rules; we want to continue to make occasional exceptions in cases of special merit.

What of the future?

The question of our lending more books and of taking in new groups of beneficiaries involves other considerations than the mere addition of a few assistants to our staff—considerations that would not affect at all the solution of the same problem when presented to any other American library. For example:

(a) It is to be remembered that the appeal to the Library of Congress is far wider, more varied, more intense, than reaches any other library. It is the whole American people's library; each of our 113,000,000 Americans is entitled to feel a proprietary interest in it. "Isn't it supported by the taxes we pay?" Even so; and if the taxes were evenly distributed per capita, it would cost each American six-fifths of one cent per year to support the Library of Congress—almost one-tenth of a cent per month.

Multitudes suppose the Library of Congress to be simply a large public library from which almost any book will be sent by franked mail to any individual anywhere in the country upon receipt of his personal request. That belief increases our labors fruitlessly. Large numbers of the librarians in the eight thousand or nine thousand American libraries dream that same dream and wake to write for books desired by members of the village "book and thimble clubs," the high school debating team, the new president of the civic federation seeking light on parliamentary law, or any other reader who presents any sort of inquiry supposed to be answerable by a book not owned in the home town.

Some great public libraries have held as a creed these same ideas about the Library of Congress. The extent, the variety, the intensity of the impossible appeal that

pours in through our doors is in itself one considerable factor in the problem of possible expansion, for it consumes much time in the mere elimination of it from the equation.

(b) There is another still weightier factor to be reckoned with. That beneficent bibliographic volcano, the Card Division of the Library of Congress, in the course of its twenty-five years of active eruption has displayed to the world at large such an exhibit of our internal content as no other American library has ever made. Our acquisitions are known in Seattle long before our own local readers get word of them through any advertisement in our public catalog. When Mr. Briggs gets in a new book he can keep it under cover for a few minutes while he skims through it. Not so the present speaker. For the "galley proofs"

Proclaim the tidings as they roll  
And spread the news from pole to pole.

Let me quote from one of the best known of all American librarians: "In asking for loans we naturally *give preference* to the libraries whose catalog cards we have on file here—as these can be looked up without trouble, making a letter unnecessary to ascertain whether the books desired are on the shelves of the library from which a loan is requested."

Quite natural. What are the depository sets of cards for? But it happens that in this particular case which he was discussing, (a request for a four-volume work which his assistant had asked us to send nine hundred miles for an unnamed reader), a neighboring library in that same city, not ten squares distant, had owned two editions for the past fifty years! It owns them still as I took pains to find out while preparing this paper. The printed catalog of that neighboring library revealed the immediate availability of that work almost at our borrower's door.



The really competent, efficient assistant who asked us for it was indeed "saving" herself "trouble," but what about her reader whose need could have been met in an hour? What about the lending library? What about her chief and his confusion of face when he found himself supporting a wholly indefensible request?

One of the formulae in a proposed library creed is: "I believe the *borrowing* library should be *trusted* to know whether the request is on a good basis." Would that all borrowing libraries *could* be so trusted. It would be much easier to assent to the converse: "The lender should be *able* to take it for granted that requests are not made on frivolous grounds." The lender *should be able* to take such things for granted in interlibrary loan dealings, but he can never attain to that pinnacle of faith all alone by himself. That is where the *borrower* can help to great effect and can thereby render some of that reciprocal service which he so often feels to be impossible. He and he alone can propagate in the lender faith in the borrower's knowledge of his own case.

Let me quote again, this time from the librarian of a high grade university not five hundred miles away from this room: "It has been a convenience to borrow of the Library of Congress because we use the depository catalog. This avoids the loss of time incidental to writing to other libraries for the loan of the book, only to learn that the book is in use elsewhere." But sometimes, as we have just seen, the use of the depository catalog as the sole source of information not only involves a loss of the borrowing library's time, and the reader's time, but leads to embarrassments. The mere weight of the business coming into the Library of Congress forces us to scan all these requests, and experience puts us on inquiry regarding not a few of the sources from which they come.

You will recall that the Report of the Committee on Cooperation at the Ottawa Conference, 1912, contained this: "A library may, without prejudicing applications



from other institutions, deny the application of any particular library, because of lack of assurance as to the safety or intelligent use of the material if lent. Its decisions in this regard, resting often upon the impressions of a general experience, ought to be unembarrassed. It should not therefore be called upon to explain them."

The two commendably frank statements that I have quoted from prominent librarians only confirm what was long before perfectly apparent, that in some libraries it has been a habit to send *all* their loan requests to the Library of Congress, if our printed cards pointed in our direction. But if all the little physical troubles in town, even matters that could be cured by home remedies without the aid of any doctor, were to be sent to a celebrated surgeon, he would be compelled, by and by, to keep a staff of medical secretaries busy in merely turning people away; or if he were good-naturedly foolish enough to treat cases of hangnail and colic, he would soon have little time for those patients whom he alone could help.

Now these two recent instances of a practice that is by no means uncommon did not occur in obscure libraries managed by people who haven't ever heard about the American Library Association, or are without a knowledge of modern library economy. "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

All this is human, natural, almost inevitable. But suppose all libraries did likewise. Our interlibrary loan system would be wrecked in a month, to the profit of nobody.

At the last December meeting in Chicago "the feeling was expressed that requests to the Library of Congress should be restricted just as far as possible owing to the great demands which the Library of Congress is receiving daily." Why should the national library be the very first resort? No matter what degree of reason and restraint is used by its borrowing friends, it is bound, inevitably, to be the recipient of more appeals, it is bound

inevitably to be the interlibrary lender of more books, than any other.

(c) In its efforts to keep its interlibrary loan work within bounds of reason, a national library can resort to no such "regional" limitations as almost any other sort of library might safely adopt. If it lends to Bar Harbor it must lend on like conditions to Santa Barbara, to Bellingham, to Brownsville, to Bismarck. If it aids the post graduates of strong Felapton, famous producer of distinguished scholars, it can not deny the post graduates of weak Fakoro, noisy parent of imitation research. If it lends to Tyre, it must lend to Troy. And if it could safely say to Compos College: "We are glad to lend to you since we *know* that you have the equipment needed for serious research, for the molding of good material into productive scholars," it could by no means speak the cold truth to Noncompos University: "You are little more than an average high school. Loans would be wasted on you," even though this just decree were affirmed on appeal to the academic Supreme Court, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The principle that governs the National Library's loans to one school must be workable when applied to all schools, weak or strong.

In these three particulars (the volume of the appeal, the public knowledge of what the Library of Congress possesses, and the national feeling of proprietorship) we are conditioned in the settlement of our loan problems as no other institution is conditioned.

Now what about taking in the post graduate students? Three years ago I wrote to a university librarian:

That the extension of the system to meet the demands of American candidates for post graduate degrees would add very greatly to the volume of business is not to be doubted. The candidates constitute a large class, intensely serious, enthusiastic, indefatigable, persistent, eager to see everything published on their subjects, certain to ask for many things on the mere speculative chance of finding in the books something of service. This isn't an imaginary view of it.

So much for the individual urge. What about the present sum total of it?

In 1914-15 the student enrollment in American colleges, universities and professional schools was 237,168: in 1923-24 it was 726,124, a growth of 210 per cent. Between 1913 and 1924 the country's annual total crop of printed theses increased 61 per cent; in that same period five universities in the Great Thesis Belt (lying along the Atlantic Seaboard between the Quinnipiac and the far side of the Schuylkill, with a total enrollment of 4,384 teachers and 70,847 candidates for degrees) produced 38 per cent of the 4,469 printed theses produced in the United States and these five large producers increased their own annual thesis output 106 per cent.

Aside from the five great thesis-producing near neighbors there are 590 other college and universities in the United States all granting academic degrees, some of them, if we may believe President Pritchett, doing imitation research, offering new courses on request without adequate resources for the conduct of such courses.

So much for the growing field, considering merely the matter of commercial expansion. Does it offer in itself any justifiable hope of our being able to take it over as a new field of action?

The Library of Congress is making, has been making for many years, will continue to make, to the American interlibrary loan service a contribution not merely substantial but preeminent; a contribution about as large (in my own personal opinion) as it is safe to undertake at present. The number of loans really "likely to advance the boundaries of human knowledge" could be increased without special difficulty *if said loans were to be requested*. But to expand the system now by extending the benefits to new *groups* of beneficiaries seems unfeasible and unwise.

For the benefits at present rendered by the Library of Congress the libraries of the country at large can

render to the Library of Congress no reciprocal service *in kind*; for where it needs to borrow from them one book it lends to them a hundred, in normal years. But they could themselves by combined efforts, but with no tremendous outlay of money or time, make much greater use than they do of our rapidly growing collections of books and of tools.

For example, there is the Union catalog of books in certain other large American libraries. It now numbers something like three million cards. It is of no great use to us, but it already is of considerable practical value to others, for by means of it we are daily advising correspondents where they can find material that we cannot supply.

*It exists for you.* Now if *you* could unite in providing in Washington a small auxiliary clerical force to handle your inquiries about the location of copies, to foster the growth of the Union catalog, to aid in condensing it (for it is a great consumer of space and we shall soon be put to it to find house-room for its constant increase), to draw other libraries into contributing significant titles to it, you would be aiding yourselves and giving to us some of the best sort of reciprocity that you could ever render.

For another suggestion, constructive, I hope: A considerable percentage of interlibrary loans could be obviated with better results to the reader and with a great saving of wear and tear, time and money, by a small auxiliary force of competent research assistants, supplied from outside to look after your interests in Washington. Every nation of any importance maintains in Washington an embassy or legation to look after its American interests. Why should not the American Library Association maintain a bibliographic ambassador (or ambassadress) in the National Capital to do research work for all the libraries who contribute to the "Embassy's" upkeep? To such an agency the libraries

could direct their inquiries about books. Some of the inquiries would result in interlibrary loans from Washington; others in photostat reproductions; others in information as to better material for the inquirer's purpose, or as to near sources. Rather frequently a correspondent, on learning that he can not borrow the big book he wants, explains what he really has in his mind and it turns out that a brief extract, not even long enough to photostat, will meet his need. That sort of work, however, takes time, more time than we have at our disposal to give to it.

Such a bibliographic embassy could render another important service to the general cause of research. Not connected with any one library, it could be an impartial observer of the interlibrary loan; devoting its attention to details, it could arrive at certain underlying principles, and reasonable rules; backed by the authority of the American Library Association, it could in time build up a code which those dissatisfied with the excellent work done in the past by the American Library Association Committee on Coordination, could accept.

Without the continuous aid of such a body (so great are the diversities between libraries, in contents, purpose and constituency), it is to be feared that there will not soon be devised any code so generally applicable to the needs of all as to receive support so widespread and so enthusiastic as to confer a sanction upon it, legal or ethical. Conceptions as to such basic things as freedom of action, responsibility and control are still pole-widely asunder even among university librarians. There are Atlantic coast librarians who so strongly sense the vested rights of scholarship in all books everywhere that they hate to lock the library door at night. And there is the Pacific Coast librarian (in a university library, too) who goes so far as to urge (in the *Library Journal*, 1924) "a limitation of interlibrary loan privileges now so freely and even *recklessly* granted" and he really believes that



"It is of doubtful wisdom to expose a rare volume to the hazards of transportation except in cases of great importance." It was an easterner who wrote me lately "the value or rarity of the book doesn't seem to me a valid ground for the refusal, since the 'sky is the limit' in the matter of insurance." What amount of insurance money would have soothed the spirit of Monsignor Mercati had the "Codex Vaticanus" been traveling homeward on the Lusitania on her final voyage, after an interlibrary loan trip to Chicago for the use of Professor Mahomet, whom no fac-simile reprint could properly satisfy?

Is it not possible for the librarian of the Vatican to regard himself as trustee for the scholars of the world and still withhold from the interlibrary loan the "Codex Vaticanus?" It is just because he is scholarship's trustee that he must decline to send it by insured parcels post, air mail, express or armed messengers for the use of any individual scholar no matter how great an authority or how autocratic. When the president of a state university urged that our first folio Shakespeare be sent two thousand miles for his use, he had to be refused. The scholars of the world have a right to expect that the custodians of their treasures will not allow any particular scholar so to overawe them by his proclamations of his own importance as to stampede them into subjecting to any hazards treasures which no effort and no expenditure could ever replace. In some matters and on some occasions a keeper of priceless things must be adamant. We are so much the trustees for the scholars of tomorrow that we must not let the scholars of today wear out the work of the dead scholars of the past.

(Following Mr. Ashley's paper Mr. Walter B. Briggs of the Harvard College Library gave an interesting talk in which he explained the reasons for the rules on interlibrary loans adopted by the council of his library. The Harvard Library receives more requests for such loans than any other institution with the exception of the Library of Congress. Because of the size of its own graduate school and the great use of the library by scholars in Cambridge some reasonable restrictions had to be



made if interlibrary loans were to be granted. The requirement that the borrowing library state "for whom the books are borrowed and for what purpose" and the rule that periodicals and publications of learned societies cannot be lent are the occasion for much criticism from other institutions. However, the Harvard Library makes exceptions for good reasons as the regulations plainly set forth. Its contention is that the local demand is so great and so pressing that to lend volumes of periodicals or publications of learned societies might seriously interfere with work in Cambridge where its first responsibilities are. Because of the importance of this library and its large part in the work of interlibrary loans to libraries of other institutions, it was thought advisable to print here the official statement of the Harvard College Library of October 1, 1916 where it gives its rules on interlibrary loans and indicates its policy.—(*The Editor.*)

### HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY RULES ON INTERLIBRARY LOANS AND A STATE- MENT OF ITS POLICY

It has long been the custom of the Harvard Library to lend its books with some freedom to other libraries for the use of scholars actually engaged in teaching or writing or scientific investigation.

In consequence of the increasing demands upon its resources at home, and because in its new building it can offer better facilities to scholars coming to Cambridge, it is desirable to state explicitly the conditions governing these loans.

The Council of the Library has therefore adopted the following rules:—

1. Books must be borrowed through a library, and the librarian in making application must state for whom the books are borrowed and for what purpose.
2. The borrowing library must assume complete responsibility for the books borrowed and for the expense of transportation both ways, and *is not at liberty to allow the books to be used outside its own building.*
3. Books may ordinarily be lent for one fortnight, but in some cases it may be necessary to restrict the loan to a shorter period. The period for which a book is lent is counted from the date it reaches the borrowing library to the date when it is sent back.

4. Not more than four volumes can be lent at one time for the use of a single borrower and loans may be renewed only in exceptional cases. Application for renewal must be made in advance of the book's becoming due.

5. Books of reference and, in general, such works as should be accessible in any good public library are not subject to loan.

6. Books will not be lent for class-room use; nor can the Library undertake to furnish material for the investigations of students in other institutions.

7. Books that are blue-starred—that is, that are not to be taken from the Library by local borrowers except under special permission—cannot ordinarily be lent to other libraries. This rule is likely to cover incunabula and sixteenth century publications, early Americana, special editions of all sorts, and in general any rare and costly book.

8. Volumes cannot be lent from large sets either difficult to replace or in frequent use, such as the publications of learned societies and periodicals.

9. No work may be lent which, from its age, delicate texture or fragile condition, is likely to suffer from transportation.

10. As a rule, it is expected that scholars living within a few hours' ride of Boston will be able to come to Cambridge to use the books which they most need here.

11. The receipt of books borrowed must be acknowledged at once, and when books are returned notice must be sent by mail at the same time. Promptness in this respect is necessary to permit of books being properly traced if they go astray. The neglect of these points, or carelessness in packing books, or in keeping them beyond the time specified for the loan, may be considered good ground for declining to lend in future.

In adopting the above rules, the Council does not wish it to be understood that they are absolutely rigid. Exceptions will be made when there seems to be particular reason. Thus, in some cases, books might be lent for the use of distinguished scholars when the same books would properly be denied to others.

Requests for information as to books in this Library should ordinarily be made through the librarian of the library that would borrow them, since it often happens that he can suggest some nearer or more natural source to which to apply.

The installation of a photostat in the Library makes it possible to reproduce with absolute accuracy and at moderate cost manuscripts or printed books in whole or

in part, and enables the Library to put at the service of other libraries in this manner material which it would not be justified in sending away from Cambridge.

WILLIAM COOLIDGE LANE,  
*Librarian.*

Cambridge, Mass.  
October 1, 1916.

### INTERLIBRARY LOANS FROM THE VIEW- POINT OF THE NON-LENDING LIBRARY<sup>13</sup>

Without attempting in any way to speak for all non-lending libraries, let me say on behalf of one such library that its attitude depends not on inclination, wishes, or desires of the staff, but on legal engagements entered into years ago.

When Joseph Green Cogswell collected the books for the Astor Library and opened its doors to the public in 1854, he had very definite ideas as to the kind of books he wanted and the class of readers he intended to plan for. Though the phrases had not then become as current or frequent as they are today, if you had asked him in those days, now nearly three-quarters of a century ago, what he was planning to do, he would certainly have replied that he was trying to bring together a collection of books that would be useful for "research and investigation."

The library had been open to the public about three years when the trustees entered on their records a stipulation expressing their views "in such a form, as to furnish a pledge, not only to the public, but to every friend of learning, who may hereafter feel disposed to aid the library by donation or endowments." At the

<sup>13</sup> Address of H. M. Lydenberg, chief reference librarian, New York Public Library, at the meeting of the College and Reference Section of the American Library Association at Atlantic City, October 4, 1926.

meeting held on July 29, 1857, the record reads as follows:<sup>14</sup>

Mr. Astor stated, that the donations by him made, and some intended to be hereafter made, were on the understanding, that it was the settled and unchangeable basis of administering the library, that its contents should remain in the library rooms, for use by readers there, and should not be lent out or allowed to be taken from the rooms; and he requested that the views of the board be freely and fully expressed. It was thereupon

RESOLVED, That the settled and unchangeable plan of administering the library is the one above expressed and understood by Mr. Astor; and that the donations in money, land, and otherwise, received from Mr. Astor, and to be hereafter received from him, and from other friends of learning, are received and will be administered according to such plan, and not otherwise.

The Astor Library was required to make an annual report to the Legislature of the State of New York, and in its report for the year 1857, which was dated the 27th of January, 1858, it elaborated this theme as follows:

In former communications to the Legislature, accompanied by the reports of the superintendent, the trustees deemed it their duty, to express their convictions, that not only the convenience of the public, but the preservation and safety of the library absolutely demanded, that the books should not be lent out or taken from the library building, under any circumstances. Several years of practical experience in the management of the institution have fully confirmed them in this opinion. In a library of reference, intended for students, properly economical of time, and often coming from a distance for consultation, the necessity for every book required being always ready for examination without delay, must be apparent. The trustees have therefore deemed it proper and necessary to prevent any further agitation of the subject by entering on their records a stipulation expressing those views in such a form as to furnish a pledge, not only to the public, but to every friend of learning, who may hereafter feel disposed to aid the library by donations or endowments.

When Mr. Lenox opened to public use in 1880 the books that represented a lifetime of collecting, he said

<sup>14</sup> This and the following quotations are from the minutes of the New York Public Library Board of Trustees.

nothing about the merits of a circulating collection as compared with a reference collection. But there is no doubt that in his mind and in the minds of the men who administered the Lenox Library the collections thus made public were intended for use within the building, and no idea of withdrawal was ever contemplated.

In the preliminary negotiations that led to the formation of the New York Public Library on the 23rd of May, 1895, the Committee of Trustees of the Astor Library in making its report to its own Board, felt it advisable to include the following paragraph:

The Committee has explained freely and frankly the commitments of the Trustees of the Astor Library to Mr. William B. Astor and his family, on the question of maintaining the Astor Library as a library of reference, that the Trustees of the Astor Library must ask in any consolidation which shall take place, that the funds of the Astor Library shall in the future be devoted to the maintenance of a library of reference for all time to come. The Committee of the Tilden Trust have fully recognized the duty of our Trustees in this respect, and are prepared to agree to such a condition of consolidation leaving the policy of the consolidated Library as to the remainder of the joint funds, to be controlled by the future Board of Trustees.

This was followed on the 8th of May by the adoption of a resolution of the Astor Library Trustees, including among other stipulations the following:

THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations hereby recognize and agree that the settled and unchangeable basis of administering so much of the Library of the consolidated corporation as consists of the Astor Library and its books and contents shall be a library of reference, as in said resolutions, of July 29, 1857 is provided, and that the real estate, funds and property, real and personal, contributed to the consolidated corporation by the Trustees of the Astor Library shall be administered and applied in support of such plan.

The agreement of consolidation, dated the 23rd of May, 1895 stipulated that the new corporation about to be formed "shall by its by-laws or otherwise make appropriate provisions with reference to the limitations,



conditions or restrictions under which any of the funds or property of the said several corporations are now held or are to be used or enjoyed by the said several corporations, or any of them, in order that the same may be fully kept and observed."

Four days later at the first meeting of the Trustees of The New York Public Library held on Monday the 27th of May, 1895, the minutes record the following action:

Mr. Cadwalader explained that the Trustees of the Astor Library had entered into certain engagements as to the character of the Library which it has been agreed should be recognized by this Board. Dr. Markoe thereupon moved the following Preamble and Resolutions, which being put were unanimously adopted.

WHEREAS, The Trustees of the Astor Library, have heretofore entered into binding engagement with Mr. William B. Astor, and the members of the Astor family, under which the larger part of the endowment of the Astor Library has been received, to the effect that the settled and unchangeable basis on which the Astor Library should be administered should be that of a Library of reference, and that its contents should not be loaned or taken from the building, and that the donations in money, land or otherwise, received for the foundation and support of the library should be administered according to such plan and not otherwise, as appears in an extract from the Minutes of The Trustees of the Astor Library, of the twenty-ninth of July, 1857, and as further appears in an extract from the report of the said Trustees to the Legislature of the State of New York, dated January 28th, 1858, copies of each of which are attached hereto;

AND WHEREAS, The Trustees of the Astor Library, as a condition of Consolidation and in order that such engagement so entered into may be fully performed, have requested some formal act on the part of the consolidated Corporation to that end;

THEREFORE RESOLVED, That The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations hereby recognize and agree that the settled and unchangeable basis of administering so much of the Library of the consolidated Corporation as consists of the Astor Library and its books and contents shall be as a Library of Reference, as in said Resolutions of July 29th, 1857, is provided, and that the Real Estate, funds and property, real and personal, contributed to this



consolidated Corporation by the Trustees of the Astor Library, shall be administered and applied in support of such plan.

When, a year later, the Trustees of the new Library presented an address to the Mayor of New York, setting forth the situation as they saw it, they felt it advisable to state at the outset that "the charters of the individual corporations and the trusts assumed towards the founders of the libraries and other benefactors, render it necessary in any event that the Astor and Lenox collections shall always remain in the library for use by readers there, and shall not be lent out or allowed to be taken by individuals from the building."

This was all very well, of course, but these legal statements, like other legal statements, need interpretation and exposition. Not long after the present central building was opened, the Executive Committee of the Trustees, in December, 1913, gave much thought to the question of policy of the library as regards the lending of books belonging to the reference department. In a report, dated December 5, 1913, they say, after a preliminary exposition of the circumstances, that they

are not disposed to recommend any change in a policy which has been in force for so many years. But they are of opinion that exceptions might properly (though rarely) be made, without at all departing from the general rule, in cases where peculiar difficulties exist in the way of those who are conducting serious investigations. One such instance is that recently cited from the American Museum of Natural History, where it was desired to compare specimens of Australian birds with the plates of the rare and costly publication known as Gould's "Birds of Australia," which this Library possesses, and where it would be quite impracticable to bring the specimens to the Library.

It is thought that such a power might properly be lodged with the Library Committee of the Board of Trustees, but that it should be subject to certain restrictions. Thus the books should never be lent to individuals, but only to institutions occupying fireproof buildings in the City of New York; the borrowing institution should be required to agree that it would be absolutely responsible for the safety of the books lent; that it would not permit such books to be taken from its building; and that the books should be returned on demand.

Your Committee therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

1. RESOLVED: That the report of the Executive Committee be approved, and this Board expresses its conviction of the necessity of adherence to the general policy heretofore prevailing in regard to keeping at all times in the central building the reference collections belonging to the Corporation.

2. RESOLVED: That the Library Committee shall, however, have power, in exceptional cases and in its discretion, to authorize the loan of a work in the reference library, but subject in all cases to the following conditions, viz: Loans shall not be made to individuals, but only to institutions occupying fireproof buildings in the City of New York. A borrowing institution must agree (1) to be absolutely responsible for the safety of every work thus lent to it, (2) not to permit any such work to be taken from its building, (3) to return every such work promptly on demand. In every case a separate application must be made to and passed upon by the Committee, stating the title of the work, the particular purpose for which it is desired, and the probable duration of the loan.

This report was accepted by the Board of Trustees of the library at their meeting held on December 10, 1913, and the two resolutions suggested by the committee were then adopted.

And that sets forth the position of the Reference Department of the library today. Whether the legal restrictions on this position could be changed by act of legislature, as Mr. Young suggests, is a matter on which I do not feel competent to express an opinion. I can say most emphatically that the Trustees, the Director, and all of us associated with them want to do anything possible to aid research and investigation in sister institutions, granting that this aid and assistance is not rendered at the expense of the trusts imposed on us.

Since 1913 one must remember that the situation has changed and the darkness of the skies has been lightened somewhat by the spread of photostat and other reproducing machines. When it comes to a question of verification of references, citations, or quotations, the library has always felt it was a privilege and a duty to under-

take such a task for a student in another city, provided this verification did not require neglect or lack of attention to the student who came in person to look at the books on our shelves. By means of the photostat this verification of references can be extended, and the providing of raw material for investigation can be carried on to an extent not dreamed of in earlier years.

Any books belonging to the Circulation Department of the library can ordinarily be sent under the usual regulations governing interlibrary loans. Any books that have been given to the Reference Department with express provision for circulating are, of course, available under the stipulations governing these deposits. For instance, the books belonging to the Military Service Institution, or the National Shorthand Reporters Association, both of which institutions have deposited their collections in the library, are available for lending to properly accredited members of the institution. These exceptions to our general practice are brought forward as instances of our desire to be as liberal as is legally possible. It is no pleasure to say "No" to every request, and we feel the world of scholarship must realize that our generally negative attitude is due, not to unwillingness to help, not to lack of sympathy, but primarily to what the law tells us can and cannot be done.

### SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF PAPERS ON INTERLIBRARY LOANS<sup>15</sup>

It is, perhaps, not merely by chance that a library whose interlibrary loan accounts very nearly balance should have the last word in this discussion. Six hundred and sixty-five loans and 522 borrowings for the year should indicate an ability to see both sides of the ques-

<sup>15</sup> By Margaret Hutchins, University of Illinois Library, Urbana, Illinois. From *Papers and Proceedings of the Fiftieth Anniversary Conference of the American Library Association*, 1926. (*A.L.A. Bulletin*. 20: 503-5. October, 1926.)

tion, to agree with the representative of one of the thesis producers that the "borrowing library should be *trusted* to know whether the request is on a good basis," e.g., that graduate students in the English Department are not asking for an early American novel for the purpose of reading, still less that an undergraduate would be thrilled by the eighteenth century *A Lady of Boston*, *Power of Sympathy*—and likewise to join in hoping that the lending library may be "able to take it for granted that requests are not made on frivolous grounds."

The question is how to reconcile the laudable wishes of borrowing libraries to satisfy the demands of their readers and the reluctance of the lending libraries to accede to all the demands whether due to lack of staff capacity to handle the work or to restrictions of trustees and governing boards or to obligations to their immediate clientele. We would like to assume that every one is doing the best he can to meet the situation, that the borrowers are not careless and thoughtless in their demands and that the lenders are not unreasonable in their refusals and regulations.

There is no doubt that the use of the interlibrary loan system is increasing tremendously as more and more people learn of its possibilities, so that it is important that interlibrary loans shall not be requested unnecessarily. Extensive borrowers are just as anxious to keep their requests within reasonable bounds and also to borrow books from the nearest library possible, in order in both ways to keep down the expense of that branch of their service, as their benefactors are to have them do so.

The most insistent problem, therefore, is how to secure the benefits of the interlibrary loans for those who need them and at the same time to prevent exploitation. The attempt to restrict the loans to certain classes of people—or rather to exclude certain classes of people from their benefits—seems not to meet with general approval. The question of the object and the urgency of

the loan is the one to be considered in deciding whether a loan should be granted, and not whether the person asking for it is a graduate student or an undergraduate, a full professor or an assistant, a president of a university or its janitor, or is connected with an institution of learning at all. It is self-evident that the librarian fifty to three thousand miles away cannot determine that. This is one good reason for all libraries to have the rule that they will lend only to other libraries and not to individuals, unless in exceptional cases of people who have no library near them.

The choice of library to which to apply must also lie with the borrower. It is annoying after having spent several weeks carefully canvassing the libraries of one's own district to have a letter to a more distant library answered with the curt advice to try nearer home—it must be in such and such a library. The distant librarian should be pretty sure of his ground before giving such advice, since it is to the advantage of the borrower to borrow from as near home as possible anyway. On the other hand, it would be politic for the applicant in such cases to mention the fact that he has exhausted the nearer resources. Form letters save time for both writer and reader, but there would be no harm in adding explanatory notes once in a while.

A revised code of the generally accepted regulations of interlibrary loans is desirable, but in my opinion not sufficient. In some way, a comprehensive view of the great use that is being made of interlibrary loans and of the difficulties besetting the large libraries which are most called upon for them should be brought before every librarian who wishes to borrow books to supplement his collection. In this way only can we become practical Christians, for the best way to interpret the Golden Rule is not "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you"—but "Do unto others as they would you should do unto them." But how can we find out what



they want unless they tell us? That is the advantage of such a conference as we have been holding over interlibrary loans.

Our speakers have presented a liberal view of the question of reciprocity between larger and smaller libraries, putting it on the basis not of an eye for an eye but of the willingness rather than the power to return favors. Mr. Wyer's suggestion to limit interlibrary loans to those libraries which are willing to lend their books to other libraries has, we learned Tuesday evening, been put into practice in Germany already. In this connection Mr. Young's suggestion of the possibility of procuring obscure books from the author's Alma Mater, which might also be extended to his home town library, points the way to the kind of specialization which may make a small library of use to the larger.

The use of some organization or organizations to act as clearing houses has been brought before us not only as a mere suggestion of a possible service of the American Library Association or of a body created by librarians making use of interlibrary loans but also as an accomplished fact both in Denmark and in one or more of our own states. This would call for the further development of a union catalog, such as exists already imperfectly in several of our libraries. The supplementing of such a tool, which we could hardly hope to have become comprehensive of all our libraries, small as well as large, by advertising rather than by broadcasting requests would also relieve the situation.

To sum up what I believe to be the possible projects helpful in our interlibrary loan system:

1. The careful revision of the code already existing incorporating the several practical suggestions made in the papers of this meeting which there is not time now to enumerate. This revision then should be distributed freely and requests made for recommendations by libraries putting it into practice.



2. The education of librarians who engage in interlibrary loans so that they may get the point of view of their benefactors and beneficiaries.

3. The creation of some kind of a central clearing house or houses for interlibrary loan requests, involving the development of a union catalog or catalogs, the extent of our country making it advisable probably to district the country rather than to depend on one organization which may be a week or more distant by mail from its clients. This should work to distribute interlibrary loans more evenly and to the advantage of both borrowers and lenders.

## APPENDIX

### THE LENDING OF BOOKS TO ONE ANOTHER BY LIBRARIES<sup>1</sup>

WORCESTER, FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1876  
TO THE EDITOR OF THE LIBRARY JOURNAL:

It would add greatly to the usefulness of our reference libraries if an agreement should be made to lend books to each other for short periods of time. It happens not infrequently that some book is called for by a reader, or that in looking up the answer to a question a librarian has occasion to use a book which he finds in the catalog of another library, but which does not belong to his own collection. The book, very likely, is one that can be replaced if lost. But it would take time to get it through ordinary channels; it might be necessary to send abroad for a copy or to wait to pick up one, if the book is scarce. In such a case it would be a great convenience to be able to borrow a book for a few days.

The Boston Public Library allows students in special branches of knowledge, when properly introduced, to take out books needed in the pursuit of their special investigations, although they do not live in Boston.

Very likely it would occasionally allow to other libraries the use of books if asked to lend them. There seems to be no limit to its courtesy.

If libraries were to agree to help one another in this way, much good would result.

Perhaps those libraries which now allow books to be taken out by certain classes of non-residents would like

<sup>1</sup> From the *Library Journal*. 1: 15-16. September, 1876.

to have applicants introduced through the libraries of the towns where they live, and instead of sending books to individuals, would prefer to send them to libraries to be delivered by them to applicants, and to be looked after as they look after their own books.

There would be a certain increase in the sense of safety in the consciousness that a library knows the peculiarities of its own readers better than they can be known to the officers of a distant institution.

I should think libraries would be willing to make themselves responsible for the value of borrowed books, and be willing to pay an amount of expressage that would make the transportation company liable for the loss in money should the books disappear in transit.

Is not some such plan as the one suggested practicable?

I am informed that a plan of this kind is in operation in Europe, and that in many places it is easy to get through the local library books belonging to libraries in distant countries. If I am correctly informed, valuable books and even manuscripts are thus sent from one library to another to a very considerable extent.

Reference libraries, it is true, all have exceptionally valuable books that they would not be willing to lend. All, too, have books that by the condition of gift can not be allowed outside of the building of the library which owns them. This condition is annexed to so many of the books in the reference department of the Worcester Library that I hesitate in urging the plan recommended. We have no printed catalog, either, of the reference department.

But even if for these reasons the privilege desired could not be extended to the library under my charge, why should not such libraries as can assist each other whenever in their power do so?

I do not propose a definitely formed plan for carrying out the recommendation contained in this letter, but

only ask librarians and others to consider whether it would not be well to form one, and whether it is not feasible to make one.

Perhaps the matter is worthy the consideration of the Conference of Libraries at Philadelphia.

SAMUEL S. GREEN  
*Librarian*

## CODE OF PRACTICE FOR INTERLIBRARY LOANS<sup>2</sup>

PRELIMINARY REMARKS: This code may be taken to embody the more essential points in the actual practice of those libraries in North America which are now the chief lenders to other libraries. Accordingly, compliance with its recommendations will entail no departure from well recognized procedure, while it will as a rule prove convenient to both applicant and lender. Yet, it is not to be expected that any code of practice could be devised which would meet, without modification in a single particular, the requirements of all, or even of very many libraries. Granting this, however, it remains true that much helpful uniformity could be easily attained in certain directions where mere confusion now reigns. The present code of practice has been compiled in the hope of conducing to such uniformity, and, at the same time, of offering a series of suggestions and recommendations on points which every library must consider when drawing up or revising its own code of rules.

A word of explanation is perhaps due in regard to Section 11. The stipulation that a book, if lent, shall be used only in the building of the borrowing library is often demanded less "in the interest of safety" than to enable the borrowing library to make sure of its ability

<sup>2</sup> The A.L.A. Code, presented by the Committee on Coordination, at the mid-winter meeting of the A.L.A. Council, Chicago, December 28, 1916. Reprinted from the *A.L.A. Bulletin*. 11: 27-9. January, 1917.

to return the book punctually. By college libraries, for instance, when borrowing books for professors, the stipulation might be welcomed as tending to produce this result.

Finally, before applying to a library for a loan, consider what that library is, and what it is doing. To quote one of the contributors to the code: "The nature and purpose of the loan system will vary with the character of the *lending* institution. No library can be expected to send its books a thousand miles for a reader whom it would not feel called upon to serve at its own door." Now, the nature and scope of public libraries, state libraries, university libraries, and libraries which exist solely for research, not to mention others, differ from each other in important respects; and there is a corresponding difference in the nature and purpose of the loans each class of library may be expected to make. Thus, public libraries can hardly ever spare, and research libraries would hardly feel it their duty to lend, current publications that can readily be purchased and for which there is a natural demand in a public library. On the other hand, state libraries would usually be prepared to lend such material.

#### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of interlibrary loans is (a) to aid research calculated to advance the boundaries of knowledge, by the loan of unusual books not readily accessible elsewhere, (b) to augment the supply of the average book to the average reader;<sup>3</sup> subject, in both cases, to making due provision for the rights and convenience of the immediate constituents of the lending library, and for safeguarding the material which is desired as a loan.

<sup>3</sup> The graduate student who has a thesis to prepare stands midway between these two extremes. It is often taken for granted that the needs of the graduate student should be met as a matter of course. But it would seem at least equally reasonable that the graduate student should choose his subject of study largely according to the means he has at hand. Not that he should be prevented from making use of an occasional interlibrary loan, but that his choice of a subject ought not to be such as to involve securing a large part of his material from a distant library.

## 2. SCOPE OR EXTENT

Almost any material possessed by a library, unless it has been acquired on terms which entirely preclude its loan, may be lent upon occasion to another library; and it may be assumed that all libraries are prepared to go as far as they reasonably can, or as their regulations permit, in lending to others. Still, the lender alone must decide, in each case, whether a particular loan should, or should not be made.

When applying for a loan, librarians should state whether a photographic reproduction would be a satisfactory substitute. Reproductions can frequently be obtained at small cost, and have an advantage over an actual loan, in that they become the property of the borrower.

## 3. MATERIAL WHICH SHOULD NOT BE APPLIED FOR

(Practice will vary according to the nature of both applicant and lender.)

Current fiction; any book requested for a trivial purpose, or which is available in other libraries more readily accessible to the applicant; also, if applying to a public library, current publications that can be readily purchased and for which there is a natural demand in a public library.

4. MATERIAL WHICH SHOULD BE LENT ONLY UNDER  
EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

(Practice will vary according to the nature of both applicant and lender.)

Material in constant use or request in the library applied to; books of reference; books that are not to be taken from the library applied to except under special permission; material which by reason of its size or character requires expensive packing or high insurance; material which by reason of age, delicate texture, or fragile condition, is likely to suffer from being sent by mail or express.

## 5. MUSIC

Music is lent on the same conditions as books, but if copyrighted, must not be used for public performances, except as permission for such use be secured from the copyright proprietor.

## 6. HOW EFFECTED

By libraries of standing, which will apply to others expected to possess the desired material, in order of their relative distance from, or relative duty to, the community in which any particular requests originate; the nearest library, whether in respect of distance, or of duty; to be approached first.



Applications for loans should give the author's full name, or at least surname correctly spelled, with initials; title, accurately stated; date; publisher, or place of publication; edition, if a particular edition is needed. Applications should be typed or written *legibly*, preferably on a card of standard library size.

#### 7. LIMIT OF NUMBER OF VOLUMES

Each library must fix a limit for itself.

#### 8. DURATION OF LOAN

This will vary with the nature and purpose of the loan. The time allowed will be stated in each case by the lender when the loan is made. Four weeks is, perhaps, a fair average period. The period is counted from the day the book leaves the lender to the day it is returned by the borrower. An extension of time may be usually obtained for good reasons. Application for such extension must be made early enough to permit an answer from the lending library to be received before the book's return is due. The lender always reserves the right of summary recall.

#### 9. NOTICE OF RECEIPT AND RETURN

Receipt of books borrowed must be acknowledged at once; and when books are returned, notice must be sent by mail at the same time. Promptness in this respect is necessary to permit books to be traced if they go astray.

Notice of return should state: Titles of books sent (with call numbers); date of return; conveyance, e.g., insured parcel post, prepaid express, etc., in the latter case, naming the express company.

#### 10. EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH LOAN

All expenses of carriage (both ways) and insurance when effected, must be borne by the borrowing library.

#### 11. SAFEGUARDS

The borrowing library is bound by the conditions imposed by the lender. These it may not vary, although a good deal will usually be left to the discretion of the borrowing library. In such a case, the borrowing library will safeguard borrowed material as carefully as it would its own; and its librarian will require to be used within its own building whatever material would be so treated, in the interest of safety, were the borrowing library its possessor.

#### 12. RESPONSIBILITY OF BORROWER

The borrowing library must assume complete responsibility for the safe-keeping and due return of all material borrowed.

In cases of actual loss in transit, the borrowing library should not merely meet the cost of replacement, but should charge itself with the trouble of making the replacement, unless the owner prefers to attend to the matter.

### 13. GENERAL PROVISIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Disregard of any of the foregoing rules, injury to books from use, careless packing, or detention of books beyond the time specified for the loan, will be considered good ground for declining to lend in the future.

The borrowing library should inform individuals of the conditions attached to each particular loan.



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